

Edward L.  
Bernays  
**PUBLIC  
RELATIONS**

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**EDWARD L. BERNAYS**

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BY EDWARD L. BERNAYS

*Public Relations* (Norman, 1952)

*Take Your Place at the Peace Table* (New York, 1945)

*Speak Up for Democracy* (New York, 1940)

*Propaganda* (New York, 1928)

*Crystallizing Public Opinion* (New York, 1923)

*The Engineering of Consent* (with others) (Norman, 1955)

***To Doris E. Fleischman***

## ***Preface***

THE PROBLEM of writing a book on public relations, after having written *Crystallizing Public Opinion* in 1923 and *Propaganda* in 1928, I find difficult. In the intervening years many books covering different phases of the subjects have been published. For the most part, however, these have dealt mainly with the mechanics of public relations, the “how to” angle, evading or avoiding the broader aspects of the field.

Since public relations rests fundamentally on ideas, not on mechanics, this approach presents a distorted picture.

This book does not profess to cover all aspects of public relations that have not been comprehensively treated so far. It attempts to do two other things.

First, it seeks to show the reader that modern public relations did not spring full-grown out of anybody’s brain—that it has its own history and that it has evolved from earliest times out of the needs of human beings for leadership and integration.

Secondly, this book seeks to present through case histories various public relations approaches that have come up in my own experience of nearly three and one-half decades as counsel on public relations. The aim in each case is to let the reader follow the approach and the thought that went into analyzing the public relations program and the conclusions reached.

The methods employed in analyzing and solving a public relations problem are indicated. The reader is given the basic principles involved. He may, if he wishes, work out their application to his own specific problems. But no attempt is made to describe the mechanics of public relations.

The division of this book into two sections—the origins and development of the field and the case histories of approaches to particular public relations problems—will, it is hoped, enable the reader to get a new and broader perspective of the profession.

The reader who recognizes implications will be able to acquire the necessary public relations techniques. But effective techniques depend on an understanding of basic interrelationships with which

public relations deals. The rest is a matter of practical experience acquired in serving an apprenticeship or intemship in the profession of public relations.

Adjusting a man to the life he needs to lead, every good doctor knows, is not a matter of merely giving him a pill or cutting out one of his internal organs. Improving public relations for an individual or an institution is not a matter of using this or that tool or technique to bring about the desired effect. The total person or institution needs to be brought into a better relationship or adjustment with the environment upon which he or it depends.

There just is no easy approach or easy solution when dealing with public relations in contemporary society. Modern public relations proceeds from an understanding of individuals, institutions, and social groups and their interrelationships.

Grateful acknowledgement is due first to my wife and partner, Doris E. Fleischman, who is as much responsible for this book as I am, even though she did not actually write the words; to my associate, Howard Cutler, for his indispensable assistance in preparing the book for the press; to Ann Anderson for typing the manuscript; and to Emilie Hatfield, for painstakingly checking the manuscript. And, of course, to all the writers, historians, encyclopedists, and others who have, through their previous researches and studies, provided the historical data I have used.

Certain chapters of this book are based on material which has been published previously in various magazines, and I want to thank the publishers who have generously given permission for the adaptation of this material. Specific acknowledgements are made at the beginning of the chapters concerned.

Edward L. Bernays  
New York City

# ***Contents***

## Preface

### **PART ONE. The Growth of Public Relations**

#### Introduction

1. Public Relations Today
2. Why Public Relations Knowledge Is Vital Today
3. Origins of Public Relations
4. From the Dark Ages to the Modern World
5. American Public Relations from 1600 to 1800
6. The Public Relations of Expansion, 1800–65
7. “The Public Be Damned,” 1865–1900
8. “The Public Be Informed” 1900–19
9. The Rise of a New Profession, 1919–29
10. Public Relations Comes of Age, 1929–41
11. The Era of Integration, 1941–51
12. The Ideal Public Relations Man
13. Extent of Today’s Public Relations

### **PART TWO. Public Relations in Action**

#### Introduction

14. The Engineering of Consent
15. Typical Action Blueprint for Public Relations Activity
16. Achieving Goals Through the Education of the Public
17. A Typical Survey Finding—America Looks at Nursing
18. Public Relations for a Profession—A Better Deal for Nurses
19. The Truth about House Magazines—Fifty Million Readers Can’t Be Wrong
20. Salesmanship and the Public Relations Approach—Hidden Markets in the Human Personality



21. Public Relations in the Theatrical World—The Crisis in the American Theater and Some Possible Solutions
22. Direct Mail: A Challenge to Research in Humanics
23. Advertising Is Behind the Times—Culturally
24. A Different Kind of Poll—Preview of American Public Opinion
25. Attitude Polls—Servants or Masters?
26. Public Relations for Public Education
27. Public Relations for Higher Education
28. The Importance of Public Opinion in Economic Mobilization
29. Public Relations and Anglo-American Co-operation—How Can the Americans and the British Understand Each Other?
30. Public Relations as Aid to Ethnic Harmony: Hawaii—The Almost Perfect State
31. Human Relations—The way to Labor-Management Adjustments
32. An Educational Program for Unions
33. How American Business Can Sell the American Way of Life to the American People

Selected List of Readings in Public Relations

Notes

Index

**PART ONE**  
**THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC**  
**RELATIONS**

## ***Introduction***

THE TERM “public relations,” as I shall point out in the opening chapter of this book, covers three fields of activity: information, persuasion, and integration. Many people believe that public relations rose suddenly in response to a need, unaware that this newest profession, like other professions, experienced a gradual development from ancient origins.

To provide the background for a better understanding of public relations today, this book begins with a survey of the development of information, persuasion, and integration from ancient to modern times, showing how the exigencies of modern life have created a demand for specialists in these fields and fostered the growth of a new profession—public relations. Following a definition of public relations today and an examination of its importance in the contemporary world, there is a review of its history, particularly the development of public relations activities in the United States from Colonial times to the present.

**Part One** concludes with a description of the ideal public relations man and a survey of the field which indicates how modern public relations has penetrated and is influencing presentday life.

# 1

## ***Public Relations Today***

THE TERM “public relations” as used in this book has three meanings: (1) information given to the public, (2) persuasion directed at the public to modify attitudes and actions, and (3) efforts to integrate attitudes and actions of an institution with its publics and of publics with that institution.

As in the case of every important activity in our complex life, there is a philosophical reason for the existence of public relations, a broad general abstraction, an underlying truth.

Public relations is vitally important today because modern social science has found that the adjustment of individuals, groups, and institutions to life is necessary for the well-being of all.

The conscious or professional direction of public relations is needed today more than ever. Society has become more complex and its processes have been speeded up over the last few centuries. The rate of progress of the many forces that make up society has been uneven, with consequently increased maladjustment and tension. Because technology has advanced more rapidly than human relations, society has been unable to cope with accelerated technological advances—the atom bomb, for example.

There are many reasons for the rise of the new profession of adjustment. Among these are the growing complexity of society, the technical improvement of media, increased education and literacy, accelerated transportation and communication, which have widened the market for ideas and things, the development and acceptance of the social sciences, the substitution of persuasion and suggestion for threat, intimidation, and force, and the extension of the right to vote. Other reasons are the growing movement toward equalitarianism, general support for the concept that private and public interest must coincide, a greater dependence on central government, and dependence of the government on mass support.

For public relations all this means that policies and practices in dealing with the public must be predicated on a joining of the private

and the public interest.

As long ago as 1934, Harold Lasswell made this distinction in his definition of the public relations counsel in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*:

The public relations counsel is no mere errand boy who discharges quantities of mimeographed releases in all directions the moment his client pays him a retainer. He may interact profoundly with the policy determiners of a given enterprise, and extensive effects may result. No detail of operation (communications appeal, market policy, credit practice) is immune from review and criticism by an expert objectively engaged in discovering a profitable sphere of activity for a client. That propagandists have induced important policy changes is well known, but what is unknown is whether the usual effort of those who specialize in assessing currents of public favor and disfavor is to make clear to determiners of business policy the advisability of adopting broad interpretations of self-interest.

The highest level of adjustment is reached at the point of enlightened self-interest. The public relations counsel must ensure that such enlightenment prevails. When self-interest was the dominating factor in most of the causes that sought public interest, press agents and publicity men could follow a function of one-way interpretation to the public, but as times changed and the concept of social responsibility was advanced by group pressure for reform, the field of public relations widened and broadened.

It is true that society thus far has developed no legal sanctions to safeguard itself against the uninformed or unethical or antisocial counsel on public relations—only against the man who breaks the law. But the competence of leaders in actual activity in the field defines and validates the term. This is made evident by the position the counsel on public relations occupies today in the three fields of communication, mass persuasion, and the ability to integrate publics with institutions and institutions with publics—his area of competence. By definition and in actuality, he is a practicing social scientist, qualified to give advice to management on policy, to give advice on human relations, and to interpret his clients to the public and the public to his clients. His competence is like that of the industrial engineer, the management engineer, or the investment counselor in their respective fields.

Obviously, public relations is not an exact science. But the approach to the problems encountered can be scientific—social engineering, the engineering of consent, humanics, human relations, or whatever term we wish to give it. There is, of course, a recognizable goal in public relations activities—good will. Good will is at once the most tangible and the most intangible asset of people and organizations. Good will depends upon the integration of an institution or individual with its publics.

It is necessary here to differentiate between publicity and public relations. Publicity is a one-way street; public relations, a two-way street. The modern public relations man owes his being to the destruction of laissez-faire in the early twentieth century; he owes it to the muckrakers of that period, the Square Deal, the New Freedom, and the New Deal.

Public relations activities are now generally accepted; but unfortunately, as so often happens with any new discipline, their acceptance does not always mean acceptance in their true meaning. This is true, too, of psychiatry and investment counseling. Many capitalize on the interest in a new field without regard to the verities. In our society the marginal man looking for speedy earnings attempts to capitalize on the good name of others and the ignorance of the public in any new area. In public relations, for instance, men from as varied fields as bookselling to association promoting have tried to turn a quick dollar by cashing in on the interest in public relations. Press agents and printers have called themselves public relations counsels. But then, even after two thousand years, quacks exist among doctors and shysters among lawyers. Yet both these fields have acquired legal sanctions against abuse. The state has enforced licensing qualifications of education and character for centuries. That some men practice deception rather than truth, use undesirable methods rather than desirable ones, is part of the pattern of the greater society of which all of us are a part. As society improves, so will it make demands upon all men to improve.

It has often been recommended that society surround the person who calls himself a public relations counsel with sanctions comparable to those with which it surrounds lawyers and doctors. Even setting up specific requirements will not prevent malefactors

from cheating or chiseling as “counsel on public relations” or under some other name. But certainly it would speed up the elimination of antisocial deviants in the field.

A heartening factor is this: every new professional field in the United States has experienced the kind of development public relations is now experiencing. First, there was the need for the specialist. When he made his success, others crowded in. As public knowledge of the field grew, the demand for the competent professional was greater than the supply. Fakers called themselves by the same name. They did not deliver. The public reacted unfavorably to everyone in the field.

Then a process of cleaning up took place. The marginal professional was eliminated by economic law or through the voluntary joining together of a number of men in the field to drive him out when excesses became too great. Men set up standards and criteria and tried to enforce them. Public opinion supported them in their activity. Then law sanctioned the criteria and standards that had been set up. This is no novel problem. In my estimation it applies to the field of counsel on public relations. Government should now step in and apply sanctions that will help this new profession in its high duty and function of integrating society and thus attempting to make a better world for all of us.

## 2

### ***Why Public Relations Knowledge Is Vital Today***

PUBLIC RELATIONS is a vital tool of adjustment, interpretation, and integration between individuals, groups, and society. Public understanding and support is basic to existence in our competitive system. To know how to get along with the public is important for everyone.

We are enmeshed with our world through a two-way process. Publics we come into personal contact with—friends, customers, purveyors—affect our attitudes and actions; and publics we never meet affect us through symbols—words and pictures in newspapers, books, magazines, radio, television, motion pictures, lecture platforms, and other communications media. Through this process, we come to understand or misunderstand the world around us. And through it we are understood or misunderstood. Since we are dependent on others and want to be understood, it is important that our conduct, attitudes, and expressions be guided by a consciousness of our public relations.

Public relations activity makes competition, another factor of our society, more efficient and effective. Things and ideas compete for public interest and support, to fasten people to existing beliefs or actions, to convert or negate them. The Bill of Rights by implication endorses competition as an essential part of our democracy in the field of ideas, for it guarantees us freedom of speech, press, petition, assembly, and religion—all of which encourage the principle of freedom of choice. In totalitarian regimes competition does not exist. Government control enforces a monopoly of both ideas and things.

Two wise men, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes and Robert M. MacIver, professor of sociology in Columbia University, have expressed this thought very effectively.

“When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths,” Justice Holmes has said, “they may come to believe, even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct, that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in



ideas, that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and the truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out.”

And Robert M. MacIver has written in his book, *The Web of Government*: “The rule of opinion differs from all other kinds of rule in that it requires the continuous coexistence of opposing opinions, hence it avoids the most deadly sort of dogmatism, the dogmatism that crushes by violence other faiths in the certainty of its own righteousness. In a democracy men still cherish their dogmas, but not to the extent of destroying other men for their contrary dogmatism.”

Public relations is an implementing factor in the many and varied competitive battles for public support in our country. Political parties use it when they compete for the public’s vote, and so do labor unions when they compete for membership and jurisdiction. Management competes with management, industry with industry, company with company, product with product. Farmers compete for land, markets, government support, and the consumer’s dollar; farm product competes with farm product. Social, educational, sport, entertainment, and church groups compete with one another for public favor and support.

The needs of our society demand competition, but the interest of a group should not, in its competitive striving, be permitted to run counter, as sometimes happens, to society as a whole. Society must, through government, ensure that a balance between the private and the public interest is maintained.

Public relations enables groups or individuals to cope more effectively with the speeded-up transportation and communication that have increased the complexity of our life. People are now more interdependent because the world is smaller. Our daily life is affected by what people think of us, near and far away. Public relations evaluates the potential impacts of public opinion and can act to meet the given situation.

Through public relations, an individual or group can ensure that public decisions are based on knowledge and understanding. The public makes vital decisions at the ballot box and the counter. People get their information in great part from the mass media that serve as

a source for attitudes and actions. Such knowledge is a prerequisite to sound decisions.

Public relations enables individuals and groups on a broad basis to apply findings of the social sciences to achieve better understanding and integration with their publics. Application of this knowledge is important to the preservation and development of our society. The public relations man, as a specialist, attempts to apply the findings of social science as an engineer applies the laws of physics or a doctor the findings of medical research.

Public relations facilitates adjustment and accommodation to the times. Men and institutions often lag behind contemporary public opinion. "The difference between evolution and revolution is the rate of change," said Charles Merriam of the University of Chicago. The objective-minded public relations man helps his client adjust to the contemporary situation, or helps the public adjust to it.

Public relations activity brings to human maladjustments the skill and point of view of a technician with expert knowledge of how human relationships function. Maladjustments in many fields—commerce, industry, religion, and government—are based on the misunderstanding of realities and communications processes. Conflict based on differing values is part of our competitive system. Conflict that is based on misunderstanding, ignorance, and apathy is unnecessary and wasteful.

Public relations provides a potent tool in the promotion of a better understanding of democracy. In the battle of ideologies that rages today between democracy and communism, the United States is an open forum for conflicting views. That very fact carries with it the obligation to rally the American people dynamically behind democracy.

Public relations counteracts the tyranny of the majority and helps re-establish the inherent pluralism of America. Majority ideas often begin as minority ideas. Both are important. The Bill of Rights protects the right to freedom of expression for every individual and group.

Long ago, John Stuart Mill described the importance of minority opinion to society as follows:

If all mankind minus one were of one opinion and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to its owner, if to be obstructed in the enjoyment of it were simply a private injury, it would make some difference whether the injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on him; but the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation, those who dissent from the opinion still more than those who hold it.

Majority opinions must further be evaluated, for majority itself may obscure the fact that it is composed of diverse opinions. When a public opinion poll results in 52 per cent for one side of a question and 48 per cent for the other, little attention is paid to the component parts in each side.

Progressive laws regarding child labor, working hours, wages, and women suffrage were brought about by effective public relations activities, which won the support of people who were passive or opposed to such laws. Small groups have worked effectively for the social interest by application of public relations research, strategy, and tactics.

Public relations provides the knowledge and the techniques that enable leaders to be more effective. In a democracy, leadership is dependent on understanding the public and knowing how to reach it.

To citizens in general, public relations is important because it helps them to understand the society of which we are all a part, to know and evaluate the viewpoints of others, to exert leadership in modifying conditions that affect us, to evaluate efforts being made by others, and to persuade or suggest courses of action.

To the businessman, public relations is also vital because he deals with many publics—with purveyors, workers, customers, government, community, retailers, wholesalers, stockholders, sources of credit, and the like. Each of these publics plays its part in the life of an individual business. Insensitivity to any of these publics may affect the total relationships, for the delicate adjustments and relationships with the public do not depend only on what is actually done: they also depend on what members of any of these publics think has been done or not done.

### 3

## ***Origins of Public Relations***

KNOWLEDGE of the past is basic to an understanding of the present and the future. Many people believe that public relations has no past, that it grew overnight. But public relations does have a history which, like that of other professions, follows a line of logical development.

Most important fields have been investigated historically by scholars. No such investigation has been applied to this subject. In recent years, there have, to be sure, been many such studies of related fields—propaganda, advertising, public opinion (e.g., *Die Offentliche Meinung in der Weltgeschichte* [*Public Opinion in World History*], by Professor Wilhelm Bauer of the University of Vienna, which was published in 1930 and has not been translated into English), and communication (e.g., Launcelot Hogben's *From Cave Man to Comic Strip*). But there is no comparable study of the history of public relations.

So far as I know, only two short studies of the historical aspect have been prepared by scholars. One is a forty-nine-page monograph, *Shifts in Public Relations*, by Professor N. S. B. Gras of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.<sup>1</sup> It deals with the development of public relations in business. The second is a twenty-three-page study, "Two-Way Street, the Emergence of the Public Relations Counsel,"<sup>2</sup> by Eric Goldman, associate professor of history at Princeton University, former editor of the *Public Opinion Quarterly*. It deals mainly with the activities of Ivy Lee and myself.

The origins of public relationships go back to earliest times. Anthropology tells us about the relationships between leaders and followers of early man. People soon recognized the necessity for planned interrelationship. Power, authority, and social control were manifestations long before recorded history. There have always been leaders and their followers. These relationships first centered around the religious and governmental authority vested in the leader. This was theocracy. Folkways and customs were more important

than individual opinions, but leaders even then had an awareness of their public relationships.

The three main elements of public relations are practically as old as society: informing people, persuading people, or integrating people with people. Of course, the means and methods of accomplishing these ends have changed as society has changed. In a technologically advanced society, like that of today, ideas are communicated by newspaper, magazine, film, radio, television, and other methods.

Information is a need of a democratic society. Modern individual psychology and social psychology provide the basis for persuasion, a symbol of pluralism and fluidity. As for the integration of social groups one with another, we are living in a culture of high social responsibility, higher than it ever has been before. Consequently integration is an increasingly complex and diversified process.

Men first communicated by signals, then by speech, then by writing. After writing, various types of mechanical and other devices were developed for conveying fact, thought, and meaning. Whenever and wherever there were such developments, they were also employed to express and mold opinion.

In primitive society, leaders controlled their followers through force, intimidation, and persuasion. When these means were not sufficiently effective, they called upon magic; and the authority of the leader was rendered valid and effective through totem, taboo, and supernaturalism. Men had not yet got beyond magic in their attempts to understand and control the world they lived in. It was used to try to control nature as well as society.

All attempts to influence or control opinion were basically conditioned by the fact that the individual had not yet developed a sense of his own identity. The evaluation of personality is a late development in the history of man. In earliest times men responded en masse. Every individual felt himself a member of his tribe or community. Basically he existed only as a part of the group. This was true even of the leaders.

Methods of persuasion changed with the beginning of recorded history, with the invention of writing.

Although ancient Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia were despotic monarchies, public opinion played some role in the national life. The governments of those ancient empires spent a great deal of money and ingenuity in building up the reputation and importance of the rulers. The literary and artistic remains of these civilizations that have come down to us contain elaborately publicized accounts of the prowess of their kings in battle, in conquest, and in annexation of territory. Most of what we know about the rulers of ancient Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia comes to us from what is left of their own attempts to mold public opinion through art and literature. Their personal and political publicity is still extant after five thousand years.

One fabrication of a public relations nature made in the theocratic states of the ancient East was the conception of the divinity of kings. The Pharaoh of Egypt, the monarch of Babylonia, and the King of Kings of Persia were called gods so that they might maintain their power through the force of acceptance of religious belief in their strength. Pyramids, obelisks, friezes, and statues propagandized the divine nature of those rulers.

In ancient Egypt, priests were experts in public opinion and persuasion. There have come down to us from those days, however, scattered poems of lamentation by laymen which criticize the arbitrary conduct of public officials. These verses indicate that some sections of the public were articulate in expressing their opinions of their leaders' actions. We may assume, therefore, that there was already a consciousness of public relations on the part of leaders and followers.

Much of the art and literature of Egypt was devoted to impressing upon the public the greatness and the importance of kings, priests, nobles, scribes, and other leaders. This was done through statues, temples, pyramids, obelisks, and tombs. It was done also through papyri and hymns. Mummies were a symbol of continuing greatness through immortality. Later Alexander the Great imported the idea of divinity from the East into Greece. He was the first Westerner to call himself a god. Eventually the Roman Caesars adopted this device of sanctifying political authority through the godhead symbol. It has come down to our time.

In ancient Israel, rulers remained frankly human, but prophets appealed to opinion in the name of God. The primary means of molding the public mind were the spoken and the written word. As it appeared in the Bible, the written word was valid, and its authority is felt to this day. The prophets of Israel had an acute sense of public relationships. They spoke as intermediaries between God and their publics. They used exhortation as a public relations tool in the market place and at the gates of the temple to influence opinion on two points—God's demand for righteousness and His love. But the prophets were political as well as religious opinion molders, rousing the conscience of the people in the face of foreign invasion, exile, and restoration. In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, stimulation of opinion was achieved not alone through speech but also through written documents passed from hand to hand.

The growth of Hellenic civilization developed a strong tendency toward secularism and individualism. In Greece, society was democratic. The individual had a sense of his own personality. Opinion was a key factor in public life. There were now greater interrelationships between people and people, groups and groups, leaders and followers—a two-way street.

The Olympic games, the Dionysian festivals, and other rites encouraged the interchange of opinion and the development of a national spirit and national unity. The big propaganda theme was Greek solidarity—the building up of a spirit of cohesion among the Greeks against the barbarians. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* expressed this spirit. The Tables of Solon, too, played their part. The dramas of Aristophanes had a comparable purpose—the development of unity in the Greeks against the barbarians. A money economy and trade furthered these ends. Free commerce was conducive to unhampered competition and the exchange of ideas and opinions.

The open market place in Athens also served as a neighborly setting for the exchange of opinion. When the citizens met there to transact business or the affairs of state, oratory was the prime media for affecting opinion. Greek poets were likewise propagandists in their day. They built up a concept of national courage. Euripides and Aeschylus stirred up hate against the Persians.

The Greek city-states—democratic or tyrannical—reflected public opinion more and more. Leaders became increasingly aware of their public relationships. The ruler or leader was no longer authoritarian as he had been in the East. He paid attention to his publics and their opinions.

The Greeks had a great civic consciousness. Every art they developed was used at one time or another as a medium of persuasion toward political or social goals. Pericles and Demosthenes used oratory to resist foreign invaders. Socrates used philosophic dialogue to teach the good life based on knowledge; Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides used drama, and Thucydides and Herodotus used history to inspire national consciousness in time of crisis. Sculpture and painting were employed to affect opinion, and Greek arches of triumph commemorated victory. They were, in a sense, tools of persuasion to ensure adherence to the ideal.

Romans, too, had their concepts of public opinion and public relations and coined words which indicate their understanding of the general subjects. *Rumores* ("rumors"), *vox populi* ("voice of the people"), and *res publicae* ("public affairs"), from which we get our term "republic," are such words. The growth of these concepts and the use of symbolism to carry them forward appear in the now famous abbreviation *SPQR*, the "Senate and the people of Rome."

As in Greece, oratory was a primary medium of affecting attitudes. Speeches delivered on the Senate floor or in the open-air forum often decided important issues, as we know from the great orations of Cicero which have come down to us. Quintus, brother of Cicero, wrote a treatise on propaganda.

The writing of history was another public relations device. Julius Caesar wrote his commentaries on his campaigns in Gaul chiefly to promote his political fortunes in Rome. A great deal of history was written to glorify Rome as mistress of the world. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the Greek historian of Rome, tells us that thousands of writers turned out histories of Rome. Martial reports that copies of his epigrams sold for six sesterces, less than the cost of a book today.

Temples, statues, and paintings were also used to publicize the Roman Empire, and Virgil's aim in writing the *Aeneid* was frankly to



glorify the Emperor Augustus and the historical mission of Rome in governing the world.

In addition to oratory, literature, and art, which had a long tradition, the Romans used pamphlets and developed a new public relations device—the daily newspaper. Centuries before the invention of printing, handwritten pamphlets were circulated in the Rome of Julius Caesar, who also recognized the importance of news in molding public opinion by publishing the *Acta Diurna*, a daily newspaper. *Acta Diurna*, which might be translated “daily records,” was issued in Rome for four hundred years, down to the fourth century A.D. It contained government decrees, personals, such as notices of births, marriages, and deaths, and accounts of fires and hailstorms.

All this was a slow development covering many centuries. Hundreds of thousands of years had passed before primitive society gave way to the early civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia; and between the first kings of Egypt and Julius Caesar there stretched four thousand years.

When the Roman empire was at the height of its political and military power, Christianity came out of Palestine. The teachings of Jesus Christ were carried to various parts of the Roman Empire by His apostles. Once the Christian church was established, its bishops and above all its fathers—Tertullian, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Chrysostom, and others—employed a new, powerful eloquence to win converts to the new creed and to strengthen the faiths of those already converted.

With the fall of Rome and the conquest of western Europe by the Germanic tribes, the free exchange of opinion was suspended for centuries. But eventually the Western world revived and brought about modern public opinion and modern public relationships. One of the major factors which conditioned this development was the Christian heritage which, in the Renaissance and the Reformation, revived for modern times the democratic traditions of Greece and the republican traditions of Rome, influenced by the Sermon on the Mount and by revolutionary advances in the scientific point of view.

## 4

### ***From the Dark Ages to the Modern World***

THIRTEEN CENTURIES passed between the fall of the Roman Empire in A.D. 475 and the enlightenment of the eighteenth century. This period of recorded history may be divided into two main parts: the Dark Ages, when on the ruins of the Greco-Roman civilization the barbarian invaders were building a new civilization of their own, in which, for a long time, public opinion played little part; and the Renaissance and Reformation, wherein the basis for the modern world was laid, with its emphasis on the importance of the individual and of public opinion.

The Renaissance was a secular movement that stressed the rights of reason to investigate nature and society. The Reformation was a religious movement that stressed the rights of individual conscience. Without these two movements public relationships as we know them today would be impossible. Both awakened the people of Europe to great new possibilities.

The Renaissance affected the development of public opinion by reviving the knowledge of the Greeks and Romans. It advanced the democratic idea through the liberation of the individual and the spirit. The great voyages of discovery opened America and Africa to Western civilization. A revolution in communication brought about by the invention of printing and by important developments in transportation and commerce accelerated the changes. Above all, the Renaissance freed the human mind to think for itself, to investigate, to persuade. These developments required and brought about free discussion. In turn, free discussion brought about a reliance of people and movements on new public understanding and public relationships.

This was also one of the results of the Reformation. The attack on authority and the emphasis on the individual that marked the movement clarified the importance of relationships between leaders and followers and between the various groups of society. Men now

developed new political theories that broke sharply with Medieval thought.

In the medieval period, church and state were one. The church molded public opinion, and its power and effectiveness depended on its public relations activities. All thinking in this period was basically determined by the church, which created and maintained unity among the people by spreading its ideas through preaching, painting, sculpture, song, and ritual, as well as through the power of religion itself. The church also used political and military action for its public relations purposes, as in the case of the Crusades, which rallied and united Christendom in war against the Moslems.

The rise of the Medieval guilds, however, introduced a new factor that developed opinion outside the church. The guilds led to the development first of small business, then of larger, more extensive enterprises. These business activities led, in turn, to an awareness of the importance of public relationships, for it became evident that business was dependent on one or more publics.

Various political developments also aroused public opinion. The battle for supremacy between popes and emperors led to the formation of parties such as the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. These parties produced their public relations experts who appealed to the reading public for support. Many of the most important propagandists of the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance were poets. Dante expressed his semi-Ghibelline views in *The Divine Comedy*; Petrarch wrote his famous epistles in support of the republic that Cola di Rienzi maintained for a short time in Rome.

In England the struggle between the nobility and the crown resulted in a document of the utmost importance for the development of public relations. The Magna Charta, obtained by the barons from King John in 1215, became the basis of our own Constitution and Bill of Rights. It set a foundation for permitting freedom of expression, persuasion, and differences of opinions of all kinds.

A century and a half later came England's Great Revolt of 1381 led by John Wycliffe, who made the first translation of the Bible into English. Although this translation was forbidden by church and state, the English version of the Bible was widely read and helped stimulate individual thinking and opinion. Wycliffe's followers, the

Lollards, spread his translation of the Bible throughout the country. They also spread his doctrines, which marked the prelude to the Reformation. In preaching reform of ecclesiastical, governmental, and social institutions, the Lollards spoke to the public wherever it could be reached—in streets, squares, or gardens. And they spoke in English instead of in Latin. Despite church and government decrees forbidding such activities, the Lollards distributed books, tracts, and broadsides. These attacked the church on the ground that it owned huge landed estates, collected exorbitant tithes, and charged high fees for baptism, marriage, burial, and prayers.

These public relations activities were so successful that every second man in England was a Lollard. Lollard ideas were promoted by popular ballads and poems. Chaucer mentioned the Lollards in his *Canterbury Tales*; and Langland preached Lollard views in his great poem, the *Vision of Piers Plowman*. When Luther's ideas reached England in the sixteenth century, Lollardry merged with the Reformation.

While the Renaissance changed Western society in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Reformation intensified that change in the sixteenth. The Renaissance was marked by a great revival of literature, painting, and sculpture through such masters as Cervantes, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci; the spread of science and philosophy; the growth of university education; the improvement of social standards; and the rise of the Humanists—scholars and writers who specialized in appealing to public opinion. The sixteenth-century Reformation was in part a revolt of the European governments against the absolute authority of the church. It was also in part a revolt of ideas, of private opinion opposed to ecclesiastical authority.

In both Renaissance and Reformation—movements that sometimes merged through the Humanists—the printed word played a great role in molding opinion. Luther's translation of the Bible into German had as great an impact on opinion as Wycliffe's earlier translation of the Bible into English. And Renaissance thinkers paid considerable attention to the problem of public opinion. Machiavelli spoke of *publica voce*, the Italian equivalent of Rome's *vox populi*. *The Prince*, which he wrote as a handbook for rulers, set a pattern

on the molding of public opinion by word and deed. A century later Shakespeare voiced the growing awareness of the power of opinion when he had the king in *Henry V* speak of “opinion that did help me to the crown.” Shakespeare also called opinion “the mistress of success.” Verbal patterns of this kind acknowledged some aspects of public relations and their importance.

By the seventeenth century it was widely recognized not only that opinion is important but that steps may be taken to modify it in certain directions. In contest with the Reformation, the church launched the Counter-Reformation. This was accompanied by appeals to opinion which for the first time were called “propaganda.” The term “propaganda” was introduced when Pope Gregory XIII established a Committee for the Propagation of the Faith to found seminars and print catechisms and other religious works in foreign countries. Subsequently, Pope Urban VIII (1623–1644) founded the College of Propaganda to educate priests. In 1650, Pope Clement VII instituted the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to spread Catholicism the world over.

Public opinion played a key role in the third phase of the Reformation, the Puritan Revolution in seventeenth-century England. Both sides in the conflict appealed to the public for support through books, tracts, and pamphlets. From 1640 to the Restoration some thirty thousand political pamphlets and newspapers were published in England. One of the great participants in this war for public opinion was John Milton, whose *Paradise Lost* expressed the Puritan point of view along with his pamphlets. In one of his most important pamphlets he emphasized the importance of free opinion and made a historic plea for freedom of the press. Subsequently, John Locke in his philosophical writings stressed the need for more democratic relations between the people and authority. At the same time the French philosopher Blaise Pascal was calling opinion “the queen of the world.”

In general the seventeenth century expanded the nomenclature of opinion molding. While the Church of Rome was establishing the terms “propaganda” and “propagandist,” the Puritan Revolution developed such terms as “agitation” and “agitator.”

A most important development of this period was the rise of the newspaper. The rapid growth of commerce in the seventeenth century produced newsletters, which various merchant princes issued to influence public opinion. The first newsletter was published by the Fuggers, German merchants and bankers, in Augsburg in 1609. The first daily newspaper appeared in Frankfurt in 1615, the first English newspaper in 1622, and the first French newspaper, the *Gazette*, was founded in 1631 under the sponsorship of Cardinal Richelieu.

England's Puritan Revolution greatly stimulated the growth of the press. *The Moderate*, one of the earliest periodicals devoted to stirring public opinion, was started in 1648. That year there also appeared in a London paper the first newspaper advertisement.

All these publications provided new tools for the dissemination of ideas and for a greater participation by the public in decisions that affected them. The growth of newspapers, books, and pamphlets in England, France, and Germany widened the area in which better public relations could operate on new social, economic, political, and religious levels.

In seventeenth-century England public opinion manifested itself in a victory over Stuart absolutism and showed rulers the need for cultivating good relationships with the public. Louis XIV of France engaged in his own type of public relations. He struck medals, and sent ambassadors to various countries to enhance French prestige.

Books, novels, tracts, and newspapers were not the only media of communication at this time. Public opinion increased in importance during the seventeenth century with the rise of two new places of assembly—the French salon and the English coffee-house.

The salon developed so rapidly that by the middle of the eighteenth century it is said to have governed French public opinion more than the royal court. And by the eighteenth century, London had more than two thousand coffeehouses where politicians, writers, and citizens in all walks of life met to exchange ideas. Germany developed neither the salon nor the coffeehouse; but its language orders in the seventeenth century, and its moral and patriotic societies in the eighteenth, were focal points of opinion which leaders recognized for public relations purposes.

Another stimulating factor in the growth of opinion was the development of reading groups, circulating libraries, and secondhand bookstores. The subscription library, initiated in the American colonies in 1732 by Benjamin Franklin, spread rapidly to Europe.

Of great importance for the development of public opinion was the publication of budget proposals by the English government in 1688. Since the carrying out of the budget depended on taxation of the people, the budget was submitted for authorization to Parliament and made available to the public. Discussions of the budget by the people's elected representatives and by the public at large emphasized the importance of opinion. In the eighteenth century French political philosophers demanded that their government follow the English example of publishing budget proposals. To ensure favorable public reception, this was finally done in 1789, at the start of the French Revolution.

Growth of public opinion in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries led to the abolition of censorship, which in turn made free public discussion possible and produced greater reliance by leaders on their public relationships. England abolished press licensing in 1695, France in 1789 at the outbreak of the Revolution. And in 1791, the United States established freedom of speech, press, and assembly in the Bill of Rights.

Many factors had contributed to the expansion of public opinion, among them the rapid development of commerce, the rise of the middle class to power, the spread of literacy and reading. The abolition of censorship reflected these trends and recognized how important public opinion was for government.

Because of the spread of opinion and the discussion that marked it, the eighteenth century has been called the Age of Enlightenment. It was then that, for the first time in history, the significant phrase "public opinion" was used. This coinage showed that leaders were more aware of the need to integrate themselves with their publics. So did a term that Rousseau invented to express the impact of public opinion: *volonté générale*, or "the general will." The Germans adopted the phrase and called it *Volksgeist*, or "spirit of the people." In this same age Jeremy Bentham demanded full publicity for all

official acts of government so that “the tribunal of public opinion” could prevent misrule.

Like the Renaissance and the Reformation, the Enlightenment was a period of great change marked by the clash of old and new ideas. In this battle for opinion, thinkers and pamphleteers like Montesquieu, Voltaire, Turgot, Rousseau, Diderot, Condorcet, and others promulgated more democratic ideas and advanced the awareness of public relationships. These philosophers conducted propaganda against the *status quo*. In the name of reason, they attacked old religious, political, economic, and social institutions and called for reform all along the line. In this way they prepared public opinion for the French Revolution, which in turn carried on intensive propaganda for its ideas throughout Europe.

The French Revolution, which opened with the storming of the Bastille in 1789 and ended with Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo in 1815, gave the term “public opinion” currency throughout Europe and the Americas. William Pitt, England’s prime minister in the Napoleonic Wars, called the French Revolution “armed opinion.”

In its Declaration of the Rights of Man, the French Revolution publicly proclaimed as one of the most important of these the right to express and communicate thought freely. The constitution of the first French Republic confirmed this idea. It contained a section guaranteeing freedom of speech and the press.

One of the most effective weapons of the Revolution was its handling of public relations. Every known method of word and deed was used to win public opinion—books, pamphlets, newspapers, the stage, satire, hair-dos, military insignia, and cockades. Even clothes became symbols of ideas. Partisans of the Revolution threw away powdered wigs and knee breeches because they symbolized the old regime. They declared their sympathy with the new era by wearing their own hair and long trousers. To this day they remain part of Western man’s costume.

A step of consequence in public relations history was taken in 1792 when the National Assembly created the first propaganda ministry in history. A section of the Ministry of the Interior, it was called the *Bureau d’Esprit*, or “Bureau of the Spirit.” Large sums were appropriated for the work of the Bureau. France was flooded



with propaganda. The Bureau subsidized editors and sent propagandists to various parts of the country to win public support for the Revolution.

Of all the leaders who arose out of the French Revolution no one understood the art of improving his public relations better than Napoleon Bonaparte. His speeches to the soldiers were designed to arouse enthusiasm and loyalty when he invaded Egypt, reminding his soldiers under the pyramids: "Forty centuries look down upon you!" He installed a printing press in Cairo and launched a newspaper, *The Courier of Egypt*, for purposes of improving his relations with the public.

When he became master of France as first consul, then as emperor, Bonaparte exercised a monopoly of the press. He transferred the official propaganda department, the Bureau d'Esprit, to the Ministry of Police. From now on the French press received its directives from the Minister of Police, Fouché. Napoleon had his own official journal, the *Moniteur*, distributed to the armies. To ensure that the troops would accept the Emperor's point of view on matters of national policy, Napoleon's editorials were read to them. The Emperor also employed other devices for influencing public opinion, including bulletins, proclamations, parades, and censorship. Napoleon was his own public relations man, using words and overt actions to win public opinion to his side. An American author, Robert B. Holtman, recently wrote a book, *Napoleonic Propaganda*, on Napoleon's propaganda techniques. He quotes the Emperor as saying that "what is truly vicious is not propaganda but a monopoly of it."

While Napoleon was flooding Europe with his propaganda, his enemies used counterpropaganda. In England, the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, author of "The Ancient Mariner," edited the *Post*, anti-Bonapartist newspaper; and in Germany the *Rheinischer Merkur* carried on propaganda against Napoleon.

By the time Napoleon was an exile on St. Helena and his empire had been replaced by the Holy Alliance, the impact of public opinion in the early nineteenth century was aptly characterized by the British statesman George Canning. Summarizing the role of opinion in the events of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, Canning

said: "It was a power more tremendous than was perhaps ever yet brought into action in the history of mankind."

Out of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution of the early nineteenth century arose modern social theories whose propaganda in the twentieth century had a great impact on society. Socialist, communist, and collectivist theories of one kind or another had been propagated in Greece by Plato; in the Middle Ages and the Reformation by religious groups. But modern socialism arose during the French Revolution. Subsequently French thinkers and some English businessmen sought to win public opinion to the cause of early theories of socialism.

At the outbreak of the revolution of 1848 in Europe, socialism found modern exponents in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Their Communist Manifesto influenced greatly the development of modern history, and, in order to combat communism, the public relations techniques of the Communist party should receive the careful study of all those interested in preserving democracy.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Count Bismarck, busy building Germany, employed the techniques of public relations as he needed them. He was no respecter of public opinion. He used the techniques available to him for his own purposes. Under his direction the Prussian government set up a Literary Bureau, which financed propaganda designed to prepare the public for war against Denmark, Austria, and France. Bismarck's aid in this activity was Moritz Busch, who gave the propaganda line to the German press.

The Prussian government published an official propaganda journal, the *Nord-deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Moritz Busch accompanied the German armies into France, and during the occupation of that country, he directed *Le Nouvelliste* in Versailles, Prussia's official propaganda organ on French soil.

After peace came, Bismarck created a Press Bureau in Germany's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This bureau reinforced the propaganda work of the Literary Bureau. German and foreign journalists were subsidized to secure favorable opinion for Germany.

In those years propaganda played a key role in France, too. Louis Napoleon, the great Napoleon's nephew, was adept in winning public

opinion. Efforts in that direction helped him to become president of the second French Republic, then emperor of France as Napoleon III.

By this time the Western world was being profoundly changed by the Industrial Revolution. The rise of modern science, invention, and technology; the development of new means of communication; the spread of democracy and literacy—all these advances gave public opinion and public relations an importance they had never before known.

## 5

### ***American Public Relations from 1600 to 1800***

PUBLIC OPINION and public relations played an important part in American life from the very beginning. Many colonists, like the Puritans who settled New England, came to America seeking freedom of religious worship. But other colonists came to seek economic opportunities or adventure and were often persuaded to do so by the great land companies through various public relations devices. Many colonists brought with them that faith in a free press which the Puritan Revolution had promulgated. They brought with them, too, the newspaper and developed it along American lines.

Opinion and opinion molding became burning issues in the eighteenth century as a result of clashes between the American colonies and the British authorities. While the authorities sought to control the press through censorship, taxation, and licensing, the colonies fought for its freedom. Newspapers and pamphlets were the chief media for reaching the public.

As the conflict between the colonists and the mother country moved to a climax, American public relations experts developed many devices to win public support for independence. They used oratory, newspapers, meetings, committees, pamphlets, and correspondence to preach their cause. This movement culminated in the Revolutionary War. And when the United States was set up as an independent country, the Constitution (1789) and the Bill of Rights (1791) proclaimed freedom of speech, press, petition and assembly as fundamental rights to which all Americans were entitled.

By making freedom of opinion and discussion a basic American right, the First Amendment of the Constitution opened the way for a free press and for all forms of opinion molding. Before anyone can wish to affect opinion, opinion must count; and before opinion can count, it must be free to express itself. Thomas Jefferson made this clear when he wrote in 1787: "The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a

government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers, and be capable of reading them.”

To go back for a moment to the preceding century, as early as 1620 the Virginia Company tried to attract settlers to the colonies by advertisements. It issued a broadside in England that promised anyone who would bring a colonist to America before 1625 a grand of fifty acres of land. In *The Atlantic Migration, 1607–1860*, a history of the settlement of the United States, Marcus Lee Hansen points out that this broadside of the Virginia Company was only the first of many similar attempts, which indicate that the colonization companies used techniques of suggestion and persuasion. The great migration from Europe to colonial America depended over the years on the maintenance of effective relationships between various companies and the publics they depended upon. According to Fulmer Mood, propaganda was employed not only to attract settlers but also to attract capital investment to the colonies.

Within the colonies themselves, there was little occasion for a while for cultivating public relations. The country was sparsely settled, communications were negligible, and the struggle for survival dominated the thought and action of the colonists. Yet from the start they were devoted to the principle of a free press. When William Penn sailed for Pennsylvania on *The Welcome*, he took a printer with him. The printer was assured he could print anything he liked for distribution to the people. And when, in 1681, Pennsylvania proclaimed freedom of opinion as a right, it was the first colony to do so. Thereafter colonial public opinion came more and more to demand a “free press in a free land.”

According to Alfred McClung Lee in *The Daily Newspaper in America*, colonial printers were newspaper publishers. A printing press was brought to Cambridge, Massachusetts, as early as 1638. There it was operated in connection with Harvard College. It fed New England sermons, broadsides, poems, Puritan tracts, catechisms, and copies of books published in England. By 1715 the American colonies had eight presses—six in New England, one in New York, and one in Philadelphia.

The first American newspaper, the *Boston News Letter*, a small four-page, two-column weekly devoted to local and European items, was published in 1704. It was followed in 1719 by Andrew Bradford's *American Weekly Mercury*, and in 1721 by James Franklin's *New England Courant*. Twenty-two new papers were started between 1713 and 1745. By 1765, every colony except New Jersey and Delaware had at least one newspaper.

For the most part, colonial papers published poems, essays, and reprints of articles that had appeared in Britain. After 1750 the colonial press devoted more space to politics, sensational events, and letters from prominent people. In 1754, the first cartoon appeared—Ben Franklin's picture of a snake divided into eight parts, with the caption "Unite or Die."

The earliest contributors to the American press combined the functions of reporters, editorial writers, and press agents. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Alfred McClung Lee points out, colonial newspapers and magazines relied on two types of contributions: poetry and prose sent in by literary people and propaganda contributed by interested parties. Typical of the latter was material appearing in the *New England Courant*, which published propaganda on religious and political issues by members of the "Hell-Fire Club." This club, Lee tells us, "schooled the press agents of the Revolution."

As the spirit of independence grew in the colonies, it came into conflict with British attempts to control the press in the interests of the mother country. As has been said, the British authorities controlled the colonial press by two methods: they licensed newspapers, and they censored news, editorials, and advertising. This made freedom of opinion an important issue for the colonists. In 1734–35, the issue was dramatized by the arrest and trial of John Peter Zenger, an American newspaper publisher.

Zenger was imprisoned on a charge of libel because his newspaper, the *New York Weekly Journal*, which spoke for the colonists, had criticized British members of the government. At this trial he was defended by the famous Philadelphia lawyer Andrew Hamilton, who argued that Zenger could not be guilty of libel if his statements were proved true. The trial resulted in Zenger's acquittal.

This verdict had great impact throughout the colonies. The Zenger story was told and retold for public relations purposes. It was used as a symbol in the fight of the American colonists for a free press of their own. Every time the British authorities threatened colonial freedom of expression, the American press promptly reprinted the Zenger story.

The Zenger trial thus played an important role in achieving two results for the colonies: it helped to establish freedom of the press and to confirm the right of newspapers to record and discuss government decisions and actions, and it established that in libel cases juries must take into account not merely the published facts but the intent of publication.

Subsequently, British authorities tried to control the colonial press by imposing a tax on each sheet printed. From 1755 on, American printers fought this newspaper tax in a public relations campaign that condemned it as "a tax on knowledge." The Stamp Act of 1765 constituted another attempt on the part of the British authorities to control the press. This act taxed newspapers according to size, and it also taxed advertisements. Furthermore it required each newspaper to carry the publisher's name, thereby making it possible for the authorities to lay their hands on critics of the government.

Continuing their fight for a free press, colonial printers instigated crowds to seize the stamped paper issued under the act. They also suspended publication of their newspapers or published them without titles or disregarded the Stamp Act altogether. This agitation, headed by Samuel Adams of Boston, finally led to repeal of the Stamp Act.

Adams has been called the great press agent of the American Revolution. In co-operation with his associates, he disseminated propaganda for American independence from 1748 to 1776, using newspapers, pamphlets, and other devices for pleading the cause of the colonies. Among the Boston newspapers Adams used for spreading the idea of independence were the *Independent-Advertiser* and the *Gazette*. He developed techniques of persuading the public that foreshadowed the United States Committee on Public Information of World War I. He kept in touch with committees of correspondence which he set up in eight towns, to each of which he

sent copies of the *Boston Gazette*. To build up public opinion in favor of independence, he used his newspaper and his committees of correspondence to publicize the Boston Massacre of 1770 and the Boston Tea Party of December 16, 1773. Paul Revere, the great courier of the American Revolution, carried the news of the Boston Tea Party to various towns, reaching Philadelphia before Christmas.

Vernon L. Parrington, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, says that Samuel Adams occupies a distinguished place in the history of the rise of political democracy: "He was by no means the first American to espouse the democratic cause, but he was the first to conceive the party machinery to establish it in practice. The single purpose of his life was the organization of the rank and file to take over control of the political state. He was the instrument of a changing world that was to transfer sovereignty from the aristocratic minority to the democratic majority. Political sovereignty inheres potentially in the mass will of the people; but if that will is restrained from exercising its strength by an undemocratic psychology, it remains powerless in the presence of an organized minority. The America in which Samuel Adams labored was ripe to throw off the inhibitions of the popular will; and it was his perception of that fact, and the tenacity and skill with which he cajoled the mass to 'make a push for perfect political liberty,' that made him an outstanding figure in our history. In his hands the majority will became in reality the sovereign will. But before he could wield it he must create it; and before he could create it he must understand the mass mind. He must turn popular prejudice to his own purpose; he must guide the popular resentment at grievances into the way of revolution; he must urge the slow moving mass forward until it stood on the threshold of independence, beyond which lay the ultimate goal of his ambitions, the democratic state. And so, in pursuit of his life purpose, Samuel Adams became a master political strategist, the first of our great popular leaders."<sup>1</sup>

Of the leading colonial press agent, Alfred McClung Lee has said in his history of the American newspaper: "Samuel Adams, the 'Father of the American Revolution,' because he was a press agent who could dim the feats of many successors, is to 'press relations experts' what Benjamin Harris and B. Franklin are to printers and



newspapermen. Under tremendous handicaps he worked out methods similar to those in use today and might be regarded . . . at the 'father' of American press agency."

Another prominent colonial press agent was John Dickinson, who has been called "the Penman of the Revolution." He was the most popular writer of his day, and his arguments for the colonial position against British rule were the most numerous and the most timely. He was a statesman whose writing often grew out of practical activity. For example, as a member of the Stamp Act Congress in 1765, he drafted that body's Declaration of Rights and its Petition to the King. He was also the author of the Articles of Confederation, passed by the Continental Congress in 1777. Among the most influential documents of independence that he wrote were *The Letters of a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, published serially in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* in 1766 and 1767. In them he attacked the British Townshend Acts and the natural-rights theory of politics, appealing to the common sense of the colonists through simple legal arguments that everyone could understand. Through the activities of the "press agents" of the Revolution the letters were reprinted in twenty-one of the twenty-five papers published in the American colonies and went through numerous pamphlet editions.

Arriving in 1774 from England, Thomas Paine joined the American independence movement and soon became one of its most effective spokesmen. He founded the *Pennsylvania Magazine* and edited it for a year and a half. His famous pamphlet, *Common Sense*, published in January, 1776, thrilled the colonies with its arguments for separation from England and the establishment of an independent American republic. *Common Sense* was reprinted by the colonial newspapers and in addition achieved a circulation of 120,000 in pamphlet form. Washington said that it "worked a powerful change in the minds of many men." The open movement for the colonies' independence dates from the publication of Paine's masterpiece of persuasion. During the Revolutionary War Paine joined the army of General Greene as a volunteer aide-de-camp whose job it was to further the morale of the troops. When the conflict went against the colonists at first, he wrote a stirring tract called *The Crisis*. The

opening line of that tract, "These are the times that try men's souls," became the slogan of the embattled Americans.

Through such pamphlets, which played an important part in creating the Spirit of 1776, and through the newspapers, as Alfred McClung Lee points out, Samuel Adams, Tom Paine, and others "filled a place in the Revolution similar to that of editors, reporters, and news-gathering associations, as well as special propagandists, during subsequent conflicts."

Oratory also was part of the strategy employed in the public relations of the American Revolution. Everyone is familiar with Patrick Henry's "give me liberty or give me death" speech. But equally effective in molding colonial opinion were the Virginia Resolutions, which Henry wrote as a member of the House of Burgesses. The resolutions were adopted as a declaration of resistance to the Stamp Act and as an assertion that the colonies had the right to legislate for themselves independently of the British Parliament.

The movement resulting in the Revolutionary War was given tremendous impetus by the wide circulation of the Virginia Resolutions by the press agents of the Revolution. They were first published in the *Maryland Gazette*, then reprinted in the *Newport Mercury*, which the British authorities promptly suppressed. But this type of censorship was unable to halt their spread. They were quickly reprinted by the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the *Boston Gazette*, and many other colonial papers.

The public relations techniques employed by the leaders of the American Revolution have been brilliantly described by Philip Davidson in *Propaganda and the American Revolution*. This study shows that the leaders recognized the importance of public relationships in creating a new society. They used newspapers, broadsides, tracts, pamphlets, speeches, songs, plays, meetings, and demonstrations to mold colonial opinion in the direction of independence. From a public relations point of view, the Boston Tea Party was an overt act staged to dramatize American resistance to British authority.

The most famous and most effective document issued by the press agents of the American Revolution was the Declaration of

Independence, a paean to freedom inspiring people the world over to this day. The author of the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson, has himself explained the public relations aspects of this historic document:

When forced, therefore, to resort to arms for redress, an appeal to the tribunal of the world was deemed proper for our justification. This was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find out new principles or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but also to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take. Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion.

In these words Thomas Jefferson summed up not only the spirit that led to the establishment of the United States as an independent republic, but also that sense of public relationships which inhere in true public relations.

## 6

### ***The Public Relations of Expansion, 1800–65***

FROM the opening of the nineteenth century until the close of the Civil War, America grew, developed, and expanded in a manner unprecedented in history. That period of six and one-half decades saw the rapid westward recession of the frontier. Parallel with this geographic expansion, the United States grew enormously—industrially, financially, and technologically. Railways were built, ships launched, and turnpikes opened. On the Eastern seaboard factories multiplied rapidly as a result of the new steam-propelled machinery invented by the Industrial Revolution. And as industry developed to unheard-of levels of productivity, corporations and stock exchanges arose.

The United States expanded from Boston and New York to the Río Grande and the Pacific Coast. Gold was discovered in California. Plank roads were built for buggy, stagecoach, and overland mail. There were real-estate booms, growing department stores, huge Southern cotton plantations worked by Negro slaves, and giant Northern plants operated by workers who spun the cotton into textiles.

In this period, the United States produced great literature. Ralph Waldo Emerson, David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and others voiced the new life that a race of pioneers was bringing forth on this continent.

Amidst this great economic and intellectual development, communication was revolutionized by the invention of the telegraph in 1832 and the invention that made it possible, after 1863, to print both sides of a four-page newspaper in one operation. The paper-making machine, patented in 1799, had taken paper fabrication out of the handicraft stage. The invention in Europe, in 1844, of a method of manufacturing paper from ground wood pulp made available a supply of raw material for the large-scale production of newsprint.

While democracy advanced through the extension of the vote to more and more groups in our society, prosperous citizens and lobbyists corrupted state legislatures in order to obtain water, pier, and public utility rights. It was the era when the dollar came to be worshiped as “almighty.” America’s amazing economic growth was accompanied by important political and social changes. Flourishing on the basis of the Bill of Rights, which gave every American the right to appeal to public opinion, reform movements agitated for free secular education, votes for women, world peace, the establishment of trade unions for industrial workers, and prohibition. Many vital issues competed for public interest and support and became public relations problems for the leaders of various groups in American society. There were conflicts between the commercial East and the pioneering West, between industry and agriculture, between the tradition set by Alexander Hamilton and that set by Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. There were debates over the settling of Utah by the Mormons and disputes over the annexation of new territory and over Manifest Destiny.

But the overwhelming issue, the greatest of all the national problems and the most far-reaching in its impact, was slavery. Eventually the question led to the issue of indissoluble federal union versus the rights of secession. And in the end the issue was settled by civil war.

Throughout these six and one-half decades, American public relations kept advancing from the press agent techniques of colonial times to Abraham Lincoln’s sound and conscious engineering of public opinion here and abroad in the interests of the Union. But the development of opinion molding proceeded unevenly and on various levels.

When Washington Irving, for example, was ready to publish his *Knickerbocker’s History of New York* in 1809, he acted as his own publicity man. Before the book was released, he launched a campaign. On October 26, 1809, he had the *New York Evening Post* run a news story headed “DISTRESSING.” It related the mysterious disappearance from his lodgings of one Diedrich Knickerbocker. Actually Knickerbocker was a fictional character Irving had invented as the author of his *History of New York*. Subsequent news stories

kept building up the mystery of Diedrich Knickerbocker's disappearance. Then came a big scoop. The owner of the Columbian Hotel, where the mysterious Knickerbocker was said to have lived and from which he had vanished, announced that the gentleman had left behind "a very curious kind of written book," which the hotel owner threatened to sell to cover Knickerbocker's unpaid bill. This "news" story was followed on November 28 by a paid advertisement in which Washington Irving's publishers, Inskeep and Bradford, announced that they were publishing *Knickerbocker's History of New York*. This publicity campaign ran for a month. It roused widespread interest in the mysterious disappearance of Diedrich Knickerbocker and great public concern for his safety, and gave the *History* a big preliminary buildup.

Washington Irving was able to engineer this piece of press agency because in the first half of the century newspapers continued to depend for their material not only on their staffs but also, as William Cullen Bryant put it when he became editor of the *New York Post* in 1826, on "friends, politicians, lawyers, and businessmen." Bryant, like other editors, felt that he received "much valuable assistance and advice" from these outside sources. During the half-century in which he edited the *Post*, he published contributions by and received visits from Martin Van Buren, Samuel J. Tilden, and other top politicians.

These men were able to obtain free publicity in the newspapers because of their political power and prestige and because they could give editors important news. Other individuals and many companies obtained free publicity by either of two methods: "free puffs," as they were called, or "deadhead" courtesies, such as free passes on the railways, extended to editors and reporters.

Until the eighteen thirties, the newspapers were usually controlled and owned by businessmen and politicians. And though they were the main avenue through which the public could be reached, people in the lower-income groups could not even afford to buy them; they cost six cents apiece. This limited the newspaper audience considerably, prevented public opinion from influencing newspaper policy, and thus made an independent press impossible.

A change came in 1830, however, with the publication in Philadelphia of the *Cent*, a penny newspaper. It was followed in 1834 by the *New York Sun*, America's first penny newspaper that was to endure. Reduction in price greatly increased the newspaper audience. By 1837 the *Sun* had a daily circulation of 27,000, or 5,000 more than its eleven New York rivals combined, each of which sold for six cents. By increasing circulation, the penny press was able to obtain advertisements, which in turn added still further to the circulation. These factors made possible an independent press in the United States. For all those who were interested in affecting public opinion, the press was now a more important medium than ever. "The newspaper," De Tocqueville observed in 1835, after his historic visit to the United States, "is the only instrument by which the same thought can be dropped into a thousand minds at the same moment."

The progress of America in opinion information and in presentation through newspapers is reflected in the fact that there were eight hundred newspapers in the entire United States in 1830. In 1840, there were fourteen hundred. Ten per cent were daily newspapers, the rest weekly. The newspapers were different from those we know today. They were charged by the leaders of the period with low taste, vituperation, favoritism, and venality. Actually they were dull. It was not until much later in the nineties that newspapers turned to streamer heads, pictures, cartoons, advice to the lovelorn, dramatics, sports, and other coverage.

One of those who took advantage of the increased circulation of the penny press to publicize his activities was Phineas T. Barnum. This great showman (who said, "There's a sucker born every minute") announced a great, sensational addition to his circus. The sensation was Joice Heth, an old Negro slave who—so Barnum told the public—had nursed George Washington one hundred years before.

Around Joice Heth, Barnum raised a terrific editorial, popular, and scientific furor. The papers gave the story space in their news and editorial columns, and Barnum kept the story boiling by writing letters to the papers under many pen names. In some letters, signed by various fake names, he denounced himself as P. T. Barnum.

Barnum, he said, was a fraud and his works were fake. In other letters, also signed by fake names, he praised himself as P. T. Barnum. Barnum, he said, was not only full of all the virtues but had performed a great public service in bringing Joice Heth, George Washington's mammy, before the American people. Barnum did not care whether the newspapers praised or attacked him, as long as they spelled his name right.

When Joice died, an autopsy revealed she might have been eighty. She could not possibly, the doctors said, have been 160 year old, as Barnum had claimed. Barnum was deeply shocked. He publicly admitted that *he* had been deceived! By this time he had collected from New Yorkers as much as fifteen hundred dollars a week over the years for allowing them to see the pipe-smoking Negress who was alleged to have nursed George Washington.

Barnum used similar publicity methods to promote other attractions, such as General Tom Thumb, the midget; Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale," with whom Barnum was said to have contracted in 1850 to pay one thousand dollars a concert for 150 performances; Zip, the What Is It?; the Cardiff Giant, "discovered" in 1869, but of course a fake; and "The Greatest Show on Earth"—launched 1871.

While Barnum was developing circus press agency in his private interest, various groups used the press to win public support for various social causes. These, too, obtained free publicity. In some cases, however, they published their own papers. In 1828, for example, the American Peace Society was formed. It emphasized the economic causes of war and preached disarmament, the outlawing of war, an international court to codify international law, and a congress of nations to promote international amity and good will. On behalf of the peace movement, William Watson started to publish the *American Peace Advocate* in 1834.

Public relations also promoted the temperance movement, beginning with Lyman Beecher's activities in 1825. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was organized in 1826; by 1834 it had one million members. By 1830 magazines of special pleading like Noyes' *Perfections* and the *New York Amulet* opposed intemperance and infidelity. In 1837 the prohibitionists launched the



*Journal of the American Temperance Union* which achieved world-wide circulation.

Religious in tone, the magazines, pamphlets and books of the temperance movement were strongly moralistic. Agents founded local societies throughout the country. Temperance speakers, amateur and professional, overran the nation, among them spectacular reformed drunkards. The movement employed every available device to win public opinion—speeches, books, anthologies of poetry and song against “the Demon Rum,” pamphlets, and petitions to the legislatures. One of the most effective devices was the simultaneous meeting of mass conventions, held once a year from 1833 on in the United States, Canada, and England. Some of the temperance magazines were called *The Genius of Temperance*, *The Rum Seller’s Mirror*, and *The Drunkard’s Looking Glass*. Sermons denouncing alcoholic drinks sold in vast quantities. One by the Reverend Eli Merrill sold two million copies.

As a result of this publicity for temperance, farmers stopped furnishing liquor to their laborers at harvest time. The Baltimore and Ohio railroad refused to sell liquor on its trains. Temperance hotels appeared all over the country. More than one million people signed the pledge never to drink alcohol in any form. Several states and cities passed restrictive legislation, and in the eighteen forties Maine passed the first state prohibition law. On the whole, however, the results of the nation-wide temperance campaign were not commensurate with the time, money, and energy spent.

But, as we have said, amidst all these developments throughout the country, one great issue more and more absorbed public attention and gave rise to accelerated debate—the issue of slavery. It came to the fore as early as the eighteen twenties, when men like Benjamin Lundy preached the emancipation of slaves. This great debate was regional in character. Southern orators, writers, newspaper editors, and legislators defended slavery and denounced the wage labor of the North. At the same time spokesmen for Northern industry attacked the slave system. These two great sections of American opinion pleaded their respective causes with

the public in election campaigns, newspapers, sermons, pamphlets, books, and legislative battles.

The antislavery forces found a powerful voice in William Lloyd Garrison. His paper, *The Liberator*, which he founded in 1831, “exerted a mighty influence,” the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us, “and lived to record not only President Lincoln’s proclamation of emancipation, but the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States forever prohibiting slavery.” So powerful was Garrison’s moral crusade against slavery by the printed and spoken word that other newspapers were afterward established upon the same principles; anti-slavery societies, founded upon the doctrine of immediate emancipation, sprang up on every hand; the agitation was carried into political parties, and into ecclesiastical and legislative assemblies; until in 1861 the Southern states, taking alarm from the election of a president known to be at heart opposed to slavery though pledged to enforce all the constitutional safeguards of the system, seceded from the Union and set up a separate government.”

Garrison’s *Liberator* denounced slavery as a “crime, a damning crime.” Similar appeals to the public to support the abolition of slavery were made by R. G. Williams’ *Emancipator* from 1834 to 1848, and by J. G. Birney’s and G. Bailey’s *Philanthropist* from 1836 to 1847. In 1852 literature was used as a weapon in the cause of abolition with the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, an antislavery novel that swept the country and roused the emotions of people who had never before been reached by books.

In 1832, Garrison organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society. This was followed by many antislavery societies throughout the North to which prominent men and women belonged. All these societies were amalgamated into one organization called the Abolitionists of the United States. Among other activities undertaken to win public support, the abolitionists sent Garrison to England to obtain the co-operation of the British abolitionists. There is a touch of modern public relations in Garrison’s return to the United States with a protest signed by such leaders of England’s antislavery movement as Wilberforce, Macaulay, and Daniel O’Connell.

The South was indignant at the activities of the abolitionists. Mobs burned antislavery literature. Presidents Jackson and Van Buren

objected to abolitionist propaganda which produced mob action. The Anti-Slavery Society had difficulty in raising its annual budget of \$5,000, and its agents received only eight dollars a week and expenses. Even some Northerners were hostile to abolitionist propaganda. They interrupted meetings, destroyed abolitionist halls and printing presses, and even resorted to personal violence.

But the abolitionist movement continued to grow in influence. From 1835 to 1860, the public relations campaign for the abolition of slavery employed every available device of communication, appeal, and action. To win public opinion, the abolitionists (1) federated local antislavery societies into a national organization; (2) attacked cotton brokering, boycotted the products of slave labor, and opened shops where they sold "free goods"; (3) obtained signatures to thousands of petitions denouncing slavery and forwarded them to Congress in order to force debates on the slavery question; (4) distributed thousands of antislavery papers and tracts, using even Southern post offices for that purpose; (5) slipped references to the abolition of slavery into textbooks and popular works with a wide circulation throughout the country; (6) brought pressure to bear on Northern legislatures to obtain laws favorable to the antislavery cause; (7) organized underground railways that helped slaves to escape.

The effect of these public relations activities in the decades preceding the Civil War is indicated in the diary of John Quincy Adams, who wrote: "The public mind in my own district and state is convulsed between the slavery and abolition questions." Although the abolitionists were a minority, their public relations was so effective that many politicians were forced to modify their position on the slavery question.

The South replied with a vast public relations program of its own in which Congressmen, editors, clergymen, professors, and political leaders took an active part. In the Senate, Calhoun defended slavery on economic and political grounds. Other Southern members of Congress declared that slavery was moral and that it was sanctioned by the Bible and the Constitution. When arguments failed, the people of the South took action, jailing and sometimes killing abolitionists and forbidding the distribution of antislavery literature.

Many modern techniques were already at work. Each side had a definite theme, objective, and strategy; used all available means of communication to reach public opinion; employed arguments based on practical considerations and theories about man and society; and appealed to various publics in American society in terms geared to influence them. This was true not only of the slavery question but of all related questions that divided North and South—the tariff, domestic policy, and foreign affairs as well.

The new Republican party spread abolitionist ideas. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that “throughout the North and under such leaders as Seward, Lincoln, Chase, Henry Ward Beecher, and Horace Greeley, all the resources of the press, the platform, the pulpit, and the lyceum or citizens’ debating club were fully enlisted in the propaganda.”

This war of opinion came to a climax in the presidential campaign of 1860 when Democrats split and the Republican candidate for president of the United States was Abraham Lincoln. The Republican campaign in that year was extremely interesting from the public relations standpoint. The new party operated on what we would today call the segmental approach. It appealed to different publics in different ways, depending on each public’s group interest.

Lincoln maintained a cautious silence while Republican party stalwarts campaigned for him in accordance with the requirements of the situation. Where feeling against slavery was strong, they emphasized the party’s declaration against the extension of slavery. Where antislavery feeling was weak, they stressed other issues. Carl Schurz appealed to labor and the German vote. In the iron and steel areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Republican orators stressed the protective tariff. In the North and West, Seward stressed Manifest Destiny, the great future of American commerce all over the world, the inevitable clash between America and Russia in the Far East. Indeed, the issue of slavery was not paramount in the campaign of 1860; a greater role was played by economic, political, and constitutional questions.

Lincoln’s election as president was followed first by the secession of the Southern states, then in the spring of 1861 by the Civil War.

Throughout the Civil War both sides carried on public relations activities to win public support. Semantics played an important role. Aware of the emotional impact of words, the North called the conflict the “War of the *Rebellion*.” The South called it the “War between the *States*.” Confederate leaders argued about what they should name their withdrawal from the Union. Jefferson Davis called it “revolution,” and to win foreign opinion to the side of the Confederacy, he sent emissaries to London, Paris, and Rome. On behalf of the North, Lincoln sent abroad more than one hundred agents, among them Henry Ward Beecher, assigned to influence public opinion in England.

Lincoln was the public relations genius of the Civil War. He had a profound understanding of the importance of public relations in a democracy like ours. “In this and like communities,” he declared at the beginning of the war, “public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who accepts or makes decisions.”

Official government efforts to influence public opinion were accompanied by unofficial public relations activities by private citizens who used books, newspapers, sermons, and speeches to disseminate their views. These campaigns to influence public opinion centered around the Civil War and the economic, political, and social issues involved. The abolitionists pressed for the prohibition of slavery forever by law; business urged state land grants to railway corporations, to homesteaders, and to colleges, as well as the importation of contract labor from Europe.

A typical example of the way government officials and politicians used the press during the Civil War to convey their views to the public is the following letter from Lincoln’s Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, to James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald*. Writing in 1862, Stanton said:

“I take the liberty to inclose to you some observations respecting the present state of things as they appear to me. . . . To the re-establishment of commercial relations, I look, under Providence, for the restoration of the government, and that work I regard, in a great measure, accomplished by the opening of the ports

occupied by our forces. . . . I think that the public mind should be directed to this state of the question, and therefore venture to submit it to you.”

In this case, Secretary of War Stanton was using the press for public relations purposes in the tradition of the colonial Hell-Fire Club and of Martin Van Buren’s relations with the *New York Post* when it was edited by William Cullen Bryant.

A new public relations trend was introduced, however, in connection with Union war finances. To finance the Union side of the Civil War, Jay Cooke and Company, leading bankers, experimented with floating a state loan. It was so successful that the Treasury Department appointed Cooke to direct the sale of federal war bonds to the public. Cooke did a phenomenal job in mass financing that made history. He not only raised the necessary funds but worked out organizational and public relations techniques that were to be used more than half a century later in the sale of Liberty Bonds in World War I. To win the public’s confidence in the Union and to rally its financial support, he used every available device.

For the old system of selling small bond issues through bankers who reached few investors, Cooke substituted big-scale, high-pressure sales methods that reached the savings of the public at large. From his Philadelphia office he sent out a large, capable, aggressive force of bond salesmen who covered the North by every means of transportation and sold bonds through local banks. He backed up these new sales methods by obtaining the editorial support of the press, running paid advertisements, and keeping in close touch and on the best of terms with newspaper reporters.

Vernon L. Parrington, in *Main Currents in American Thought*, says:

In certain aspects Jay Cooke may be reckoned the first modern American. He was the first to understand the psychology of mass salesmanship. It was his fertile brain that created the syndicate and conceived and executed the modern American “drive.” Under his bland deacon-like exterior was the mind of a realist. He assumed that every man has his price, but he knew that few men like to acknowledge the fact even to themselves; so he was at immense pains to cover our poor human nakedness with generous professions. If he were to lure dollars from old stockings in remote chimney-corners he must “sell” patriotism to his fellow Americans; and to do that successfully he must manufacture a militant public opinion. The soldier at the front, he announced in a flood of advertisements, must be supported at the rear. It was every loyal American’s

war, and patriotism demanded that idle dollars—in greenbacks—should be lent to the boys in blue, and a grateful government would return them, both principal and interest, in gold. To induce slacker dollars to become fighting dollars he placed his agents in every neighborhood, in newspaper offices, in banks, in pulpits—patriotic forerunners of the “one-minute men” of later drives. They also served their country, he pointed out, who sold government bonds on commission. He subsidized the press with a lavish hand, not only the metropolitan dailies but the obscurest country weeklies. He employed an army of hack-writers to prepare syndicated matter and he scattered paying copy broadcast. His “hired friends” were everywhere. In a hundred delicate ways he showed his appreciation of patriotic co-operation in the bond sales—gifts of trout caught with his own hands, baskets of fruit from his own garden. He bought the pressings of whole vineyards and cases of wine flowed in an endless stream to strategic publicity points. Rival brokers hinted that he was debauching the press, but the army of greenbacks marching to the front was his reply. It all cost a pretty penny, but the government was liberal with commissions and when all expenses were deducted perhaps two millions of profits remained in the vaults of the firm, to be added to the many other millions which the prestige of the government agency with its free advertising brought in its train.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of his success, Cooke became a White House adviser. In a sense he was a public relations adviser, for when he urged Lincoln to remove General McClellan it was on the ground that military defeat led to a drop in bond sales.

The two decades that culminated in the Civil War also saw the development of public relations techniques, theories, and nomenclature. In *Two-Way Street*, Eric Goldman reports the first reference to the kind of activity that we now know as “public relations.” This reference was made in a talk on “The Theory and Regulation of Public Sentiment,” given in 1842 by Hugh Smith, rector of St. Peter’s Church in New York City, before the alumni of Columbia University. Commenting on this talk, Goldman says:

Admitting the evils of the press agent, Smith insisted that public opinion would always be made by human beings whether they were condemned or not for their activities. As a matter of fact, the Reverend continued, efforts to influence opinion were entirely legitimate, provided only that they avoided “the employment of falsehood,” appeals to “prejudices” or “passions,” and the “proscription of those who will not fall in with particular opinions and practices.” There was even a touch of the most modern public relations techniques in the Rector’s remarks. Opinion was often influenced, he commented, by the “power

of association,” and the association was more likely to be “*implied* than *expressed*.”

In those days even the *New York Times* went to a political boss for financial aid. Thurlow Weed, said to be generous with friends and associates, put Raymond, editor of the *Times*, under obligation by lending him money in 1854. Says Francis Brown, in his book, *Raymond of The Times*: “Financial ties bound the *Times* to the Seward-Weed machine,” though the public was not aware of it.

As has been pointed out, the growth of the penny press resulted in the rise of advertising as a main source of income for newspapers. This situation gave the advertiser significant influence over the news and editorial columns. The tendency was to give the advertiser not only space for which he paid and in which he announced his wares, but in addition “free puffs” in the news and editorial sections. Papers also published paid advertisements in the guise of news or editorials.

By the late 1840’s, some newspaper publishers began to look askance at these practices. In 1848, James Gordon Bennett’s *New York Herald* announced that it would no longer disguise paid advertisements as editorial notices. All advertisers would be on an equal basis, the *Herald* said, adding that from now on it would show “no preference to any class, company, association, corporation, interest, or individual.” Despite Bennett’s innovation, other newspapers continued to give advertisers free puffs and to run paid announcements disguised as news or editorial comment.

The practice is still prevalent today, when newspapers give free puffs to advertisers in the form of news and feature stories that appear in the theater, motion picture, food, building material, and automobile sections of the paper. In the eighteen fifties, however, the practice covered all fields. In addition, the press was still subservient to powerful economic and political interests.

Describing the role of advertisers and press agents in the eighteen fifties, Fredric Hudson, in his *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872*, reports that in 1854 Horace Greeley struck out against the prevailing practice of publishing paid advertisements as news or giving free puffs to advertisers.

“When you want an article inserted to subserve some purpose other than the public good,” Greeley declared, “you should offer to



pay for it. It is not just that you should solicit the use of columns not your own, to promote your own or your friend's private interests, without offering to pay for them. The fact that you are a subscriber gives you no right in this respect; if the paper is not worth its price, don't take it. True, you may often crowd an article in, through the editor's complacency, that you ought to pay for; but he sets you down as a sponge and a sneak forthwith, and it is not often out of the way. If you wish to use the columns of any journal to promote your own or some other person's private interest, offer to pay therefor; there is no other honest way."

Hudson, who published his book in 1872, adds: "No matter outside of the advertisement columns should be paid for. When an editor talks about his space, and his time, and that he publishes a paper for his bread and butter, he tells his readers what they already know; but to admit matter in his news and editorial columns which is paid for is simply treating his readers dishonestly. Newspapers have two sorts of revenue: one comes from subscribers, and the other from advertisements. The former, in reading the contents of the news and editorial columns, do not expect to find, under the implied indorsement of the editor, all sorts of schemes for the making of money. They know what the advertisements are, and are influenced by them without imposition. Newspapers like the *Tribune* are now, we hope, beyond permitting their columns to be used in any other than in the most legitimate way."

These practices were by no means restricted to the United States. In 1851 a French playwright named Léon Gozlan, commissioned to write daily editorials for a Paris newspaper, arranged with an advertising agent to sell salesmen the privilege of having their names appear in his editorials. Political propaganda of a dubious kind was also common in Europe. In order to discourage Germans from emigrating to the United States, for example, Saxony displayed placards on its street corners in 1854 announcing that Germans who had been foolish enough to go to America had been killed in Know-Nothing riots. But this kind of propaganda was worked both ways.

In 1816–17 representatives of Dutch shipping firms, eager to get settlers, had spread propaganda that at Rotterdam and Amsterdam free transportation across the Atlantic was available. And in the

eighteen twenties landowners and emigrant agents had presented their advertisements in travel form in guidebooks.

Propaganda can, indeed, be used for all kinds of purposes, good, bad and indifferent; social and antisocial. Lincoln showed an awareness of the public-interest aspect of public relations when he said, during one of his debates with Douglas, that “what kills a skunk is the publicity it gives itself.”

When he entered the White House, Lincoln received all callers on what he called a “public day.” He used to describe these receptions as his “public holiday baths.” He understood the public relations value of these personal contacts, and he understood the importance of the press. During the Civil War the *New York Herald* quoted him as saying: “The press has no better friend than I am—no one who is more ready to acknowledge its great power for both good and evil. I would always like to have it on my side, if it could be so, so very much depends upon sound public opinion. . . . Ah, do you gentlemen who control so largely public opinion, do you ever think how much you might lighten the burdens of men in power—those poor unfortunates weighed down by care, anxieties, and responsibilities?”

During the war the following factors gave press agency new and greater impact: the expansion of the newspaper industry; the growth of advertising with its free puffs and editorial notices; the newspaper interviews, an American invention that displaced the publication of unsolicited articles by authorities in various fields. These developments gave newspaper staffs greater control of news material and contributed to changes in the arts of opinion molding.

## 7

### ***“The Public Be Damned,” 1865–1900***

THE PERIOD 1865–1900 was one of rapid industrial expansion and social change, of great individualism and the robber baron competitive spirit. The farmers, reformers, and workers who joined hands in attacking the *status quo* reached a boiling point in their indignation at abuses and excesses.

Technological and other changes, which came as a by-product of ruthless competition, developed at a more rapid rate than society was able to assimilate them. These factors helped to create a climate of opinion and action that resulted in the acceptance, when the twentieth century came, of Theodore Roosevelt’s Square Deal, Woodrow Wilson’s New Freedom, Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal, and Harry S. Truman’s Fair Deal. It was what made it possible for the muckrakers to fight for and to initiate social reforms.

Economic, political, social, and technological forces at work in the 1865–1900 period laid the groundwork for the public relations of the nineteen twenties. Oil, iron, steel, railroads, electricity, and the internal-combustion engine revolutionized the age. The frontier disappeared and the land was settled. Emerging from a great civil war, the country’s drive was toward industrial and commercial expansion at an accelerated rate. Science, invention, and technology completely transformed the national economy, the life of the people, and all group relationships. They even changed America’s political complexion.

Proprietorships and partnerships grew into huge corporations. Staggering sums of risk capital were needed to finance these trusts. The demand for capital and the need for franchises and other legislative sanctions far outran the concepts of social responsibility and conscience the entrepreneurs of the period possessed. Capitalism was aggressive and overindividualistic. The struggle between capital and labor often broke into violence. Exploitation of people and things was a keynote of the era.

America, indeed, developed a feeling of the utmost complacency about itself, and this feeling was reflected in the attitude of the tycoons of the period. "The 65,000,000 Americans of today," Andrew Carnegie boasted, "could buy up the 140,000,000 Russians, Austrians, and Spaniards; or, after purchasing wealthy France, would have pocket money to acquire Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and Greece."

The laissez-faire economic liberalism that had prevailed in the preceding period continued to the end of the century. The robber barons took control, with no heed to public opinion, for there was little public opinion on the ethics of private enterprise. The men who headed the great corporations were developing the country. They symbolized America's growth. Robber barons they may have been, but before public opinion caught up with them, they were also heroes to many. Businessmen wanted nothing more than police protection from the government. They wanted to develop their markets by themselves. They wanted to make a profit and to be left alone. All this was part of the trend of the times. Individuals manipulated corporations, finances, and stocks. Company practices were secret.

The increasing complexity of the structure of the United States brought about a need for adjustment between groups. Speeded-up communication and transportation brought the country closer together and made public opinion and public relations a matter of growing concern to all groups. At the end of the period, the first great revolution was to begin. Under the impact of muckraking, the "public be damned" period was to give way to "the public be informed" and the whitewashing period.

The phrase "the public be damned" characterized the period. When William Vanderbilt, head of the New York Central, uttered that phrase in 1879, he did not foresee how the public would interpret it or the furor it would create. It was said under simple enough circumstances, but time has obscured these circumstances and now there are several versions of the story. One version is that a reporter, interviewing Vanderbilt, asked him why he was eliminating the fast extra-fare mail train between New York and Chicago. The magnate replied that the train wasn't paying. But the public found it useful and convenient, the reporter said; shouldn't Mr. Vanderbilt accommodate

the public? “The public be damned!” Mr. Vanderbilt is said to have exclaimed. “I am working for my stockholders; if the public wants the train, why don’t they pay for it?” Another version, related by Roger Butterfield in his book, *American Past*, is that two reporters asked Vanderbilt about the new fast train he had just put on to cut the New York—Chicago running time. Did it pay? “No, not a bit of it,” snapped the railroad king. “We only run the limited because forced to by the action of the Pennsylvania Railroad.” “But don’t you run it for the public benefit?” one reporter insisted. “The public be damned!” Vanderbilt exploded.

Vanderbilt’s words fell like a bombshell in a social and economic contest in which the public was already angry at what it considered the despotic power of the railroad barons. Legislative investigations, like the one conducted by the Hepburn Committee of the New York Legislature in 1879, had exposed secret agreements between railroads and oil refiners. The public was complaining of tyranny over the cost of milk in New York. It was alleged that Vanderbilt was collecting on milk shipments. All railroads were under attack, but the New York Central was particularly criticized. And much of the fire was directed against Vanderbilt himself because he owned 87 per cent of the railway’s capital stock.

When Vanderbilt, irritated by public criticism and the machinations against him of rival railway tycoons, exclaimed, “The public be damned!” he seemed to confirm the popular feeling that the railway owners were despotic. The phrase aroused widespread indignation, and the attacks on Vanderbilt became more intense in the press and in the legislature of New York.

On the advice of his lawyer, Chauncey Depew, Vanderbilt decided to do something to allay public anger. What he did was explained by his attorney as follows: “Mr. Vanderbilt, because of assaults made upon him in the Legislature and in the newspapers, came to the conclusion that it was a mistake for one individual to own a controlling interest in a great corporation like the New York Central, and also a mistake to have so many eggs in one basket, and he thought it would be better for himself and for the company if the ownership were distributed as widely as possible.”<sup>1</sup>

Vanderbilt sold some of his holdings and succeeded in allaying public indignation. But, perhaps because he had no competent advice in public relations, which was undeveloped at that time, he never succeeded in altering the image of himself created in the public mind by one fatal interview. And the phrase remains the symbol of an unwillingness to integrate oneself with the public on which one is dependent—an ignorance of public relations.

Businessmen wanted to expand and expand. The development of a great continent obscured their activities until public opinion was awakened to the menace of concentration of power, and organized to meet the situation. And even then the general public did not show any real interest in what were considered the private affairs of private business—company capitalization, financial reports, and interlocking agreements.

Eric Goldman explains the situation in *Two-Way Street*: “The greater the potential interest in an industry, the more attention it was likely to give to keeping its operations secret. This secrecy reached its climax in the policy of ‘the public be damned.’” And N. S. B. Gras commented: “American business in the nineteenth century went back to the exclusiveness of the Medieval Guilds in its attitude towards the public.”

Rugged individualism was carried to incredible extremes. In 1868 rival armed gangsters controlled by J. P. Morgan and Jim Fish terrorized a large part of New York state in a war for physical possession of a railroad. When the excesses of business were criticized or opposed, business was likely to bribe legislators or use detectives or troops against workers. Jay Gould and Commodore Vanderbilt both bribed state legislators in the eighteen seventies.

The first counter-reactions in public relations moves came from those groups of the public who felt most keenly the effect of unregulated economics—the working man, the farmer-voter in the Middle West, and the Eastern intellectuals. In 1883, Joseph Pulitzer urged that the public be kept informed: “There is not a crime, not a dodge, not a trick, not a swindle, not a vice which does not live by secrecy. Get these things out into the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later public opinion will sweep them away.” Attacks were made on business by the

Granger movement, the Reformers, the Green-backers, the Populists, the labor movement, and the Socialist party. Mrs. Mary Lease admonished the farmers to "raise less corn and more hell." As these groups developed, activities to curb the excesses of big business were set in motion, ranging from investigations by government to regulative laws. But big business was dominant and the Supreme Court was conservative.

Labor was growing. The National Labor Union, the first national federation of unions, was organized in 1866. It was superseded later by the Knights of Labor, the first real national organization of labor, organized in 1869. The Knights were followed by the American Federation of Labor, organized in 1886. The first federal eight-hour-day law was passed by Congress in 1868. Followers of Christian Socialist doctrines supported labor demands and challenged the robber barons. Their challenge was based on social conscience, social responsibility, and the public interest.

Government also began to assert itself. The Panic of 1873, following the Black Friday of 1869, had made the public aware of the dire results of financial manipulation. In 1876 and 1879 public opinion was aroused by Congressional investigations of Standard Oil. Demands for the curbing of the lobbying of railroads and large corporations were made in the seventies. In 1877 Georgia courts ruled that lobbying was a crime. Strikes of this period were marked by huge mass meetings at which labor spokesmen attacked capital and urged that the United States be transformed into a labor republic. Nation-wide railroad strikes paralyzed nearly every city through violence, disorder, and destruction. In 1877 federal troops were used for the first time in a peacetime labor dispute. More than one hundred participants were killed.

"In the course of the warfare," Charles A. Beard says, "the public was deluged by propaganda. Whenever a fray ended in bloodshed, the press published charges and countercharges of the kind that have become familiar in the records of industrial conflicts. According to the employers, the strikers were guilty of starting each riot. According to the strikers, the blame rested on the militia and the proof lay in the fact that nearly all the deaths were among the ranks of workmen. Popular sympathy was enlisted by pictures of starving

women and children. Appeals were made on behalf of the suffering; collections for them were taken at public meetings, and farmers sent food from their fields by the wagon load.”

Novels that appeared in the eighteen seventies led the attack on the various forces of corruption that had developed and built up public opinion against them. *The Gilded Age*, a novel by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, led off the battle. In 1879, Henry George propounded his single-tax doctrine as an attack on the excesses of business.

As the decade closed, Greenbackers and Populists were pressing comparable points of view. And yet, despite the agitations of the eighties, no drastic curbs were placed on business, even though the reform trends matured and intensified. These movements were marked by an increasing development of public relations techniques by pressure groups, farmers, and labor, and the impact of many brilliant individuals. Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward*, for instance, was followed by forty-nine novels based on his ideas.

Foreclosures of bank-held mortgages, the low price of farm products, the high cost of manufactured goods, trusts, corners, combinations, pools, stock speculation, and adulteration of food were under attack in the printed and spoken word. So were the use of federal and state troops, court injunctions in strikes, and the refusal of business to recognize trade unions. Corruption in politics, manipulation of the government by business, problems raised by immigration and slums were topics of nation-wide debate. Socialist groups saw the issue as one between capital and labor. Most writers and reformers, however, saw the issue as one between the American people and the misuse of wealth.

In 1881, Henry Demarest Lloyd published an exposé of the Standard Oil Company in the *Atlantic Monthly*. In 1894 he expanded this article into a book called *Wealth Against Commonwealth*. Other publicists, including Lord Bryce, E. L. Godkin, and Andrew D. White, helped to impress the public mind with the existence of corruption in business and government.

These publicity and public relations impacts were having effects in the late eighties even in government circles. President Cleveland, in his 1885–89 term, recognized the place of trade unions and urged



voluntary arbitration of industrial conflicts. In 1886 the Chicago Haymarket riots roused public opinion against unionism, while inspiring liberals and labor groups to attack the *status quo*.

By 1888, Congress had a federal commission to offer its services to employers and employees when an industrial conflict affected interstate commerce. That same year, the New York Legislature and the federal Congress investigated trusts in general. These legislative investigations had no practical effects on the rapid growth of business and finance. But they had public relations consequences, because they made the public more aware of the excesses of big business and provided the climate of opinion for a constructive change.

Jay Gould, when asked in 1887 to explain his manipulation of Union Pacific stock, told a Senate investigating committee: "I thought it was better to bow to public opinion, so I took the opportunity to place the stock in the hands of investors. Thus, instead of being thirty or forty stockholders, there were between six thousand and seven thousand representing the savings of the widows and orphans."

Many forms of publicity and public relations carried on by industry were beneficent. James J. Hill, of the Great Northern and allied railway lines, for instance, recruited farmers and merchants in the East for the building up of the Northwest. Publicity men told farmers in the Eastern states of the opportunities that awaited them on the frontier, just as the colonial companies had attracted European settlers to the United States.

Basically as a public relations response to the attack on big business, Andrew Carnegie wrote *Triumphant Democracy* and four years later *The Gospel of Wealth*. He suggested that natural laws brought wealth to those who had superior ability and energy and pointed out that American captains of industry had a social obligation to discharge.

As the eighties moved into the nineties, the battle lines between big business and the opposition were being drawn more closely. Both sides were using public relations techniques without any real concept of public relations as we know it today. Both sides were

wooing the public with every weapon at their command—principally the press.

In the nineties labor perfected its organization and techniques under the American Federation of Labor led by Samuel Gompers, who went into the political arena supporting candidates of either major party when they were favorable to labor. The United Mine Workers was organized in 1890. The old free American opportunity had seemingly disappeared. They wanted a crusade against business and the corrupt political bosses. This was a depression period which gave dramatic setting to William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech.

Government, representing the people, took a more active part in the situation. In 1890, for instance, Massachusetts became the first state to pass laws requiring registration of lobbies. In 1892 a Congressional committee investigated labor conditions in the steel mills of Homestead and the causes of the great steel strike, and criticized the steel company. Nevertheless the strikers failed, and unions were thrown out of mill areas. The Pullman Company was condemned by a Presidential commission, but the strike was defeated by an injunction and by federal troops.

In the late nineties labor and political leaders like Debs, John Mitchell, Bryan, and Roosevelt were debating on social justice, with Christian Socialists and Thorstein Veblen participating. Propaganda against business by many diverse groups was accelerated. Bankers had seen businessmen competing brutally with each other. They decided to build up larger units to prevent such occurrences. But as centralized power became greater, it offered its antagonists greater opportunity for attack. "Morgan, McKinley, and the trusts, or William Jennings Bryan!" was the battle cry. McKinley led the assault on the foes of the *status quo*. Bryan protected home and family. Slogan fought slogan.

Business had its defenders in the nineties, too. Its spokesmen included many legislators, state and national, and Supreme Court justices. William T. Harris, the United States commissioner of education, brought the business point of view to educational group leaders. He defended laissez-faire economics on the ground that it represented the highest possible individual self-realization. Elbert

Hubbard glorified the go-getter in his "Message to Garcia." Horatio Alger promoted the cult of success in dime novels like *Ragged Dick*, *Luck and Pluck*, and *Tattered Tom*. The imagination of the country thrilled at the careers of Thomas Edison, who started as a newsboy; Charles Schwab, who began as a coachman; Andrew Carnegie, who began as a factory hand; John D. Rockefeller, who was a bookkeeper; and men like Huntington, Armour, and Clark, who began life as poor farm boys.

Lives of great political figures also confirmed the American creed that there is room at the top and you can't keep a good man down. Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant had risen from poverty to eminence. One biography of Lincoln went through thirty-six editions. Grant's memoirs were a best seller. It was an era of boundless hope and opportunity whose slogans were "from log cabin to White House" and "from rags to riches." But the dominant figure was that of the successful businessman.

In considering historical trends, it is most fascinating and rewarding to look behind those trends and explore the techniques and skills that channelized them. The period 1865–1900 offers a rich area for such exploration. Here we shall deal largely with one particular aspect of public relations—the development of publicity techniques and skills. The press of this period was, as we have seen, partisan, organized along political or other lines—like Garrison's *Liberator*. Advertising had not been developed broadly. Puffery and advertising went hand in hand. Press agents were working the press.

Newspaper publicity was not restricted to the efforts of financial press agents. C. H. Day, for instance, who functioned in the minstrel field, got a job publicizing the Arlington Minstrels in 1868; then, in 1869–70, was publicity man for Laura Keane. In 1881 he was hired by Adam Forepaugh and became famous by thinking up beauty schemes that achieved world-wide notoriety and brought Forepaugh an additional \$500,000 in two seasons.

America's prosperity had opened all fields of entertainment to the people. Phineas T. Barnum, already discussed as one of the greatest showmen this country has ever produced, continued to be active after the Civil War. In 1871 he launched his circus as the "Greatest

Show on Earth," a slogan which Barnum and Bailey uses to this day. Barnum, himself a brilliant press agent, used advance men or press agents to publicize the show. One of his press agents was Levi Lyman. From 1877 on, Toby Hamilton, later press agent for Barnum and Bailey's "Greatest Show on Earth," developed a nation-wide reputation.

One of the best-known theatrical press agents of the eighteen eighties was Jerome Eddy. He was still on the scene when I worked with the publicity department of Klaw and Erlanger in 1913. Eddy was then a retired old man sitting at a high desk in the office for road advance men.

Railroads began to stage publicity stunts as early as 1870. That was the year when the Pacific Railroad invited 150 "ladies and gentlemen" to ride on the new line it had opened from New York to San Francisco. A printing office was installed on this special train, handled by four compositors and one pressman. Local, general, and world news was telegraphed to this office at each point where the train stopped for the night. This news was printed and distributed to the railroad guests. At the next stop, the newspaper was mailed to the guests' friends in various parts of the country. This stunt gave the Pacific Railroad a great deal of publicity.

In 1892 the manufacturers of Sapolio staged a dramatic publicity stunt to promote their product when they sent a fourteen-foot sloop to Spain to celebrate the Fourth Centenary of Columbus' discovery of America.

Individuals, too, were growing more aware of the value of free newspaper space. As early as 1873, Edward Everett, a popular lecturer and former president of Harvard University, sent proof sheets of his lecture to the morning newspapers for publicity purposes. And in 1876 both the Republican and the Democratic parties maintained press bureaus that carried on national and local publicity campaigns in that year's elections.

The publicity men of the eighteen seventies and the eighteen eighties were pioneers in the field of modifying public attitudes, most of whom saw their work only in terms of obtaining favorable mention in the press for their employers. They operated at a time when paid newspaper advertising was passing through unrestricted

development, and when the border line between advertising and publicity was rather intangible. As early as 1876, Jacques Offenbach, a traveler to the United States, found that advertising in the country was “playing upon the brain of man like a musician does upon a piano.”

The growing importance of the advertising manager was widely discussed in newspaper circles in the eighteen seventies. There was considerable complaint that newspapers changed news accounts that they felt might be inimical to the interests of their advertisers, who were beginning to appear in large numbers and were buying a great deal of space. Newspaper circles also complained of the growing practice of puffery. Indeed, giving free publicity in news and editorial columns to advertisers had now reached such a stage that in 1872 a Boston advertising agency announced as one of its services: “Our local list for Boston advertisers is composed of twenty-two papers in the suburban towns. Offers rates which defy competition. Advertisements inserted in all the lists of other agencies. Advertisements written; editorial notices obtained. A first copy of paper furnished to advertisers.”

The advertising field, still young, had not yet set its house in order economically. Rates were subject to change without notice, and deals for free publicity were made with advertisers regardless of the ethics involved. Between 1880 and 1890, the amount of newspaper advertising increased from about \$40,000,000 to nearly \$96,000,000 annually.

In his *History of American Journalism*, James Melvin Lee points out that the decade from 1880 to 1890 was marked among newspapers by a tremendous increase in all kinds of advertising—patent medicines, soaps, breakfast foods, gas companies, classified ads, and the like. This, in turn, brought a flood of press agency that got the press to publish advertisements in the guise of news. It was possible, according to Lee, “to insert at a higher cost almost any advertisement disguised as a bit of news. Sometimes these paid reading notices of advertisers were distinguished by star or dagger, but more frequently there was no sign to indicate to the readers that the account had been bought and paid for and was not a regular news item.”

In 1898, for example, F. S. Monnet, the Ohio attorney-general, revealed that the Standard Oil Company's advertising agency, the Jennings Advertising Agency, "distributed articles to the newspapers and paid for them on condition that they appeared as news or editorials." Indeed, the Jennings Agency's contract with newspapers stated that the "publisher agrees to reprint on news or editorial pages of said newspaper, such notices set in the body type of said paper, and bearing no mark to indicate advertising, as are furnished from time to time by said Jennings Agency at the rate of —— per line." This was not an isolated instance.

Samuel Hopkins Adams, in his *Great American Fraud*, proved that in their advertising contracts the leading manufacturers of patent medicines bound the newspapers to aid their fight against hospital legislation.

The relation of the press agent to the advertiser became the subject of sharp comment in the *Journalist*, a forerunner of *Editor and Publisher*, the professional publication of newspapermen. In October, 1884, the *Journalist* said: "Journalism has come to such a state that any enterprise which depends to any extent upon advertising in the public press must have special men hired solely for the purpose of 'working the press' for notices, free advertising, and the like." It went on to point out that the circus had its Toby Hamilton, the theater its Jerome Eddys, the railroads and hotels "men whose duty it is to see that the transportation line or hotel is properly looked after in the newspapers," adding, "This is to a certain extent a legitimate result of the hurry and bustle in our business life and if the position is filled by a suitable man, there is no doubt that it is the means of saving thousands of dollars each year to the corporation employing them." The *Journalist* noted further that Sam Carpenter, divisional press agent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, gave passes to newspapermen and that P. L. Tucker functioned in a similar capacity for the Erie Railroad.

At its 1888 convention, the American Newspaper Publishers Association openly worried about the effects of press agency. J. E. McManus of the *Philadelphia Record* read a paper on "Puffs and the Dividing Line between News and Advertising." But there was no real effort to eliminate free publicity until about twenty years later.

The power of advertisers over the news columns attracted the attention of social scientists as early as 1881. That year Charles Dudley Warner, author and journalist long associated with the Hartford, Connecticut, *Courant*, read a paper on the American press before the Social Science Association in which he said:

The advertiser acquires no more rights in the newspapers than the subscriber. He is entitled to use the space for which he pays by the insertion of such material as is approved by the editor. He gains no interest in any other part of the paper, and has no more claim to any space in the editorial column than any other one of the public. To give him such space would be unbusinesslike and the extension of a preference which would be unjust to the rest of the public. Nothing more quickly destroys the character of a journal, begets distrust of it, and so reduces its value, than the well founded suspicion that its editorial columns are the property of advertisers. Even a religious journal will, after a while, be injured by this.

Of course, there was a reason for all this, he adds, that newspaper reporters were overworked and poorly paid, hence “favors and the flattery of attention from the financially successful brightened the routine of their work, eased the strain on their pocketbooks, and gave many the prospect of a lucrative press agent’s job as something to look forward to.”

In spite of all this criticism, editors with limited staffs of low average competence were glad to get well-written handouts from cordial press agents, provided the material had some news value. Improved press construction and stereotyping rapidly swelled the size of newspapers. Editors needed more and more copy for their papers. This need was not wholly satisfied by boilerplate and other syndicated feature material. And at the bottom lay this fact: newspapers themselves had only lately come out of their subsidized state.

## 8

### ***“The Public Be Informed,” 1900–19***

AS the twentieth century got under way, there was a conscious recognition of serious national abuses in the United States. American democracy was challenged to meet a crisis created by the economic, technological, and social changes of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The fabulous expansion of industry, the decline of rural opportunity, and the rugged individualism of the industrialists produced a revolution in public opinion, which now embarked upon a quest for change. Discontented workers, farmers, and reformers developed new public relationships that effected political and social changes. Speaking for this nation-wide reform movement, the muckrakers, writing for popular magazines and for newspapers, made a concentrated attack on the abuses of business and other forces.

The various public relations drives that took place in the period dealt with the broad field of social justice and conservation, with better safety of the workers, with food adulteration, and with greater care of children. Science and invention, of course, which had greatly improved communication and transportation, aided all these activities. The power press, the linotype, the typewriter, the telephone, the wireless, the telegraph, the motor truck, the automobile—all were agents of great acceleration in this period. It must be remembered, too, that the development of newspapers and low-priced magazines helped to further all kinds of public relations activities.

Mr. Dooley (F. P. Dunne) characterized the period in these words: “Yes, sir, th’ hand that rocks th’ fountain pen is th’ hand that rules the wurruld.” And the success of the books that Jack London wrote excoriating the prosperous classes bore him out.

From 1901 to 1916 muckrakers exposed the excesses and corruption of business and government. They had an all-star cast: David Graham Phillips, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, and Lincoln



Steffens, with their writings appearing in *McClure's*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Munsey's*, and *Collier's*.

This period also saw a growing movement against imperialism, handled on a broad public relations basis. Writers, editors, and social workers such as William Graham Sumner, William James, David Starr Jordan, Jane Addams, E. L. Godkin of *The Nation*, Samuel Bowles of the *Springfield Republican*, Hamlin Garland, William Dean Howells, Mark Twain, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and William Vaughan Moody joined in.

Ray Stannard Baker made an investigation of the railroads and showed how they corrupted politics by means of powerful legislative lobbies. He demonstrated their influence over public opinion through a secret publicity agency, furnished with millions of dollars for purposes of buying the press. William Randolph Hearst, a potent figure in his early days, attacked privilege, monopoly, corporate power, the "plunderbund" of banks and trusts, and prepared the way for S. S. McClure's muckrakers. He attacked the coal trust and helped jail the president of the ice trust, although his editorial opinions in theatrical matters were for sale, as Will Irwin proved.

The efforts of all these people compelled business to recognize how vital favorable public opinion is. The result was a counteroffensive by big business through a type of public relations that was principally whitewash. Business did not alter its conduct greatly. The large units under attack merely had their publicity men paint attractive pictures of what they were doing—depending principally upon the technique of presenting favorable facts.

"Nature will care for progress if men will care for reform," Professor Simon N. Patton declared. William Graham Sumner, of Yale, talked about the laws of nature and success. George Baer, president of a Morgan railroad, warned the workers that God in His infinite wisdom had turned over wealth to the capitalists.

The muckrakers' era began in 1901, rose to its full force in 1903–1904, got some support from President Theodore Roosevelt, lasted until 1912, and found later expression in President Wilson's "New Freedom" of 1916. Says C. C. Regier in his book, *The Era of the Muckrakers*:

Jarred for once out of their calm satisfaction with life in this benign land, men started examining the institutions they had built, and suddenly realized that they fell somewhat short of the assumed perfection. Muckraking became a paying business, enlisting the most skillful pens the nation could boast.

Ida M. Tarbell's exposé of the Standard Oil Company, Upton Sinclair's attack on meat packing, and the *New York World's* campaign against insurance companies are examples. Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, and others spent months checking and rechecking facts before publishing an article of five or six thousand words exposing some particularly unsound activity of business or government. There is no doubt that they had a tremendous effect in showing business, as well as government, the increasing interest of the common man in their activities. There is no doubt, either, that the Square Deal legislation of Theodore Roosevelt and the New Freedom of Woodrow Wilson came about as results of the impact of the muckrakers. They created a keen awareness of the public interest as a more and more dominating force. They demonstrated that business and government were public, not private, business.

Between 1895 and 1905 Le Bon wrote *The Psychology of Peoples* and Tarde his *Opinion and the Crowd*. Now the whole subject of public opinion was being more and more widely discussed in serious circles. Indicating the general attitude in America in 1899, John Graham Brooks had said: "The forced publicity for private as well as for public corporations in Massachusetts makes any dangerous type of stock-watering extremely difficult."

The honeymoon between business and the public of the developing period of the sixties was over now. The nature of the new age was not limited to public interest in business and government alone. Every activity that concerned the public, from politics to journalism, was exposed to continue scrutiny, criticism, and constructive action. Stuart Chase had not yet written of "the tyranny of words," but certainly words had a political tyranny on the public. Louis Brandeis coined the phrase "the curse of bigness" and made it stick in the public mind. Publicity was the keynote in all this activity. William James expressed the belief that anything might be done that any sufficient number of subscribers to any sufficient number of sufficiently noisy papers might want. And Henry C. Adams, professor

of economics at the University of Michigan, said, "From whatever point of view the trust problem is considered, publicity stands at the first step in its solution."

Women's clubs, too, were becoming adept at the lively business of shaping public opinion. There were one million members of women's clubs who were learning how to achieve social reform through exerting mass pressure on politicians and industrialists. The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs veered from contemplating abstractions in their meetings to concerning themselves with the social order—child welfare, public health, protection of women in industry, pure food, extension of education, civil service reform, and the elimination of commercialized vice.

Muckraking did not make business change its spots; it simply made business word-conscious, and it made publicity one of the weapons in a free-for-all fight for the maintenance of social control over the good will of the public. News and handouts chosen with a view to their effect on the public were released to the papers. A broad policy of public information was instituted, first by those groups that had been most affected by the muckrakers and then by other groups. It is interesting to see how the electric railways, the electric light, and other public utility interests took up the challenge.

The presidents of the United States, too, did their best to utilize the new weapons and techniques in order to reflect their leadership and, at the same time, the spirit of the times. Theodore Roosevelt was already a veteran in dealing with the press when he went to the White House, and the press, of course, was then America's number one communications medium. While Roosevelt was governor of New York, relates James E. Pollard in *The Presidents and the Press*, he used to see the newspapermen every day at 11:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. These conferences were conducted on an informal, intimate basis, a system he kept when he went to the White House. David S. Barry, a Washington correspondent, in *Forty Years in Washington*, asserted that Theodore Roosevelt "knew the value and potent influence of a news paragraph written as he wanted it written and disseminated through the proper influential channels better than any man who ever occupied the White House."

Roosevelt's words and deeds had a striking effect on public opinion. They dramatized the movement for social reform and brought new laws that gave legal sanction to those reforms. Roosevelt himself coined the word "muckrakers" from a character in *Pilgrim's Progress* "who could look no way but downward with the muckrake in his hands."

President Taft, unlike his predecessor, did not know how to handle the press. He was sensitive to newspaper comment and annoyed by reporters. While he was secretary of war, Taft had got along well with the press and was popular with Washington correspondents. But when he became president, his relations with the press became aloof, cold. He started off on the wrong foot when he refused to see the correspondents on the day he was inaugurated, and as time went on, the newspapermen became angry with him for withholding news.

Major Archie Butt, military aide to both Roosevelt and Taft, explained: "Mr. Roosevelt understood the necessity of guiding the press to suit one's own ends. He was his own press agent and he had a splendid comprehension of news and its value." With Taft it was different. He did not understand, Butt said, "the art of giving out news and therefore the papers print news as they hear it and without any regard for the facts."

As a professor at Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson had already affirmed his belief in publicity. In the White House he used publicity techniques to validate his New Freedom and to help carry on the great war. "Pitiless publicity" was one of his basic policies, and he believed that public opinion is a cleansing force in the world.

Wilson was the first president to hold formal, regular press conferences at the White House. But he did not have Theodore Roosevelt's gift for handling newspapermen. They often irritated him, especially when they wrote about members of his family. His success with the press, such as it was, was chiefly due to his secretary, Joseph P. Tumulty. Sometimes Wilson lost his temper at press conferences. He resented, for example, speculation in the press that he might appoint Bryan secretary of state. He felt the press should not know of any White House action until it was an accomplished fact. Indeed, press coverage of government news was

so unsatisfactory during his first year in the White House that Wilson seriously considered creating a Federal Publicity Bureau.

In a talk before the Press Club in New York in 1916, Wilson said: "Force can sometimes hold things steady until opinion has time to form, but no force that was ever exerted, except in response to that opinion, was ever a conquering or predominant force."

In government agencies created to curb business excesses, such as the Federal Trade Commission, Wilson used publicity as a weapon. The fight for pure food was based largely on publicity. It was correctly assumed, in this case, that if the public learned of the misdeeds of food manufacturers through publicity, they would correct them through law.

This great reliance on publicity as such, by the presidents as well as by business interests, is striking and significant. Today, modern social psychology teaches us that information usually acts merely as an intensifier or weakener of preconceived attitudes and has very little part in the process of persuasion. But in the early days of the century we did not know this fact.

As far as business public relations was concerned, the public be damned attitude of many businessmen was still prevalent as the twentieth century opened. In 1902 it was given dramatic currency when the anthracite coal operators faced a strike.

"The coal owners," Eric Goldman reports in *Two-Way Street*, "had nothing to say to the press, nothing co-operative to say to the President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, when he intervened. Their one widely circulated statement came from that master of malaprops, owner George F. Baer, who announced that 'God in His Infinite Wisdom has given control of the property interests of the country' to the George F. Baers. The miners, on the other hand, were led by the shrewd John Mitchell, who saw that both the President and the reporters were given a maximum of co-operation. The President and the reporters, in turn, saw to it that the miners had one of the best presses labor has ever enjoyed in American history. Public opinion swerved overwhelmingly to the side of the workers. They ended up with terms which represented a real victory and the coal owners became a favorite subject of muckraking as well as an almost constant target of strike threats."

But other industries were beginning to recognize that the time had passed when the public could be damned or ignored. In his history of the daily newspaper in America, Alfred McClung Lee reports that in 1905, the railroads, facing a popular demand for rail legislation which resulted in passage of the Esch-Townsend Bill by Congress, set up a committee of three road presidents to woo public opinion. This committee consisted of Samuel Spencer of the Southern, F. D. Underwood of the Erie, and David Wilcox of the Delaware and Hudson. Samuel Spencer raised funds and hired a Boston publicity firm whose clients included Harvard University.<sup>1</sup>

The moment it was engaged by the railways, this firm expanded. It increased its Boston staff; it opened offices in New York, Chicago, Washington, St. Louis, and Topeka, Kansas, where the railway crisis was particularly acute. It also employed agents in South Dakota, California, and elsewhere.

According to Ray Stannard Baker, who described this publicity campaign in *McClure's* magazine in 1905–1906, the Chicago office of the publicity firm employed forty-three people. In addition, it hired “very able correspondents” in various state capitals and in Washington, who sent in “daily or weekly letters on various subjects . . . never failing to work in masked material favorable to the railroads.” Representatives of the firm contacted editors throughout the country, noted their views, supplied them with material, then checked the newspaper columns for results.

Soon the anthracite mine owners also changed their policy in regard to the public. When a second coal strike broke out in 1906, they realized how much public good will Baer's statement had cost them and decided to call in the publicity firm of Parker and Lee. This firm advised the coal operators, according to Professor Goldman, that the public was no longer to be ignored, in the traditional manner of business, nor fooled in the continuing manner of the press agent; the public was to “be informed.”

The junior partner of that publicity organization was Ivy Ledbetter Lee. Any book on public relations that would fail to include his activities would be incomplete. He entered business publicity in a period when the muckrakers were at the height of their influence. From 1906, when he represented the anthracite mine operators, until

his death in 1934, he obtained recognition for the policy of “the public be informed.” While sometimes he lapsed from his declared policy to the extent of whitewashing his clients, students of the field consider his statement to the press on behalf of the mine owners in 1906 and his “Declaration of Principles” issued to the press that year as milestones in the development of modern business publicity.

The story of Ivy Lee may be read in detail in books by Alfred McClung Lee, Eric Goldman, and Henry J. Pringle.<sup>2</sup> Lee’s clients over the years—among them the Pennsylvania Railroad, the Rockefeller interests, Armour and Company, the Bethlehem Steel Company, the Chrysler interests, Portland Cement, the Guggenheim interests, and the American-Cuban sugar interests—indicate the growing awareness of business that public opinion must be taken into consideration. It was this growing awareness that made the nineteen twenties and the nineteen thirties the most important era in the development of modern public relations.

In the period under discussion, and down to the nineteen twenties, the term used for informing the public was “publicity.” But as early as 1908, Theodore Newton Vail, president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, used the term “public relations.” This term appeared as the heading of Vail’s annual report in March of that year.

“Is the management honest and competent?” Vail asked. “What is the investment? Is the property represented by that investment maintained at a high standard? What percentage of return does it show? Is that a fair return? Is it obtained by a reasonable distribution of gross charges? If these questions are answered satisfactorily, there can be no basis for conflict between the company and the public.”

In August 1913, Vail issued another statement to the effect that “We have found . . . that our interests were best served when the public interests were best served; and we believe that such success as we have had has been because our business has been conducted along these lines.”

Again, in October, 1913, addressing the annual conference of the Bell Telephone System in New York, Vail said: “The immediate future is bound to be a very critical period, in that the public mind is in an

unsettled condition toward all utilities. The present attitude of the public towards all utility corporations has been largely created by the past attitude of corporations towards the public by assuming to be and acting as if they were masters of the situation. The public are awakening to the fact that they, the public, are the masters of the situation. . . . There is no doubt in my mind that the public, by that I mean the majority, are inclined to be fair.” In his talk Vail emphasized the informational aspect of public relations. The only way to correct misunderstanding or lack of knowledge on the part of the public, he said, was “by publicity and full disclosure.” Publicity based on information and disclosure was as far as the field had gone when the first world war broke out.

Engineering of consent on a mass scale was ushered in in the 1914–18 period. With the outbreak of World War I, nations in the conflict and out of it recognized how important public opinion was to the success of their efforts. Ideas and their dissemination became weapons and words became bullets. War publicity became an essential part of the war effort in each country. The problem of persuading people—in one’s own country, in neutral countries, and in enemy countries—was a challenge to the policymakers and to all those in positions of power in all countries.

Many private groups and quasi-public organizations, such as the Red Cross, launched nation-wide publicity campaigns to win public support for the war and their particular share in it. This gave publicity men an opportunity to apply their techniques in the national interest.

From 1914 to 1918 it was the government of the United States that was the number one factor in public relations. President Wilson and various government agencies mobilized every known device of persuasion and suggestion to sell our war aims and ideas to the American people and to neutral countries, and to deflate the morale of enemy countries and get them to accept our ideas. *Propaganda Technique in World War I* by Harold Lasswell, *Words That Won The War* by Mock and Larsen, and *How We Advertised America* by George Creel have told this story well.

One of the factors which had a tremendous effect on the shaping of public attitudes during World War I was President Wilson’s power to dramatize ideas, to be his own public relations man. It was he



more than anyone else who gave government public relations in wartime its essential content and immense moral drive. Only one week after the United States entered World War I, on April 6, 1917, the Committee on Public Information was set up, under the direction of George Creel, former editor of the *Rocky Mountain News*. Other members were the secretaries of War, Navy, and State. The United States Committee on Public Information had two sections: foreign and domestic. It functioned until June 30, 1919. One of the very potent factors in its organization was the fact that Creel was close to Wilson and that government action at high policy levels was coordinated with the propaganda.

I worked with the Committee on Public Information in the United States and in Paris. I saw it grow from an idea to an organization of enthusiastic men and women in key centers throughout the world. They used the aptitudes and skills they had to further a better knowledge everywhere of the war aims and ideals of the United States.

This experience in broad public relations was a turning point in the lives of those who worked with the Committee. My own case was typical. After getting a Bachelor of Science degree at Cornell University in 1912, I entered journalism. In 1913, when I was editor of the *Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette* and associated with *The Medical Review of Reviews*, Richard Bennett, the actor, was trying to produce Brieux's play, *Damaged Goods*, but was unable to find sponsorship for it because the theme of the play offended the people in prewar America. Believing that Brieux's drama taught an important social lesson, I wrote Bennett that our magazine, *The Medical Review of Reviews*, would give him its moral support in his efforts to produce the play. Bennett asked me to call on him. The result of our talk was that we undertook, under the auspices of the *Review*, to mobilize public opinion for the production of the play, which was produced under our auspices.

The technique employed became widespread in later years. We set up a Sociological Fund which appealed to public opinion to support production of the play on the grounds of social and public interest. Membership in the Fund cost four dollars and entitled the member to a ticket for a performance of *Damaged Goods*, when and

if produced. The results were described by John T. Flynn in an article entitled “Edward L. Bernays: The Science of Ballyhoo,” published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, 1932:

Bernays . . . sent invitations to our New York nobility. Every person of social prominence was invited to subscribe four dollars to endorse a movement for dealing with sex via *Damaged Goods*. . . . these notables responded nobly. When they did, the rank and file of humbler folk proceeded, as always to grow curious, and then to toddle along behind their betters, sending in their four dollars by the hundreds and the thousands. Bernays had committed an act of public relations without realizing it. . . . Some years were needed to bring this truth home to him.

The success of *Damaged Goods* when it was performed led to my being engaged as press agent in 1913 by the theatrical firm of Klaw and Erlanger. Here I handled stars like Ruth Chatterton, Henry Miller, Otis Skinner, and others. In 1915, I became publicity manager and partner of the Metropolitan Musical Bureau, where I handled Enrico Caruso and other Metropolitan Opera stars. And in 1915 and 1916 I became publicity manager for the Diaghileff Russian Ballet, of which Nijinsky was the star performer.

I was thus, technically, a press agent, but with this difference. In handling *Damaged Goods*, my first assignment, I had arrived at the principle that public opinion is influenced powerfully by group leaders and opinion molders—journalists, politicians, businessmen, scientists, professional men, authors, society leaders, teachers, actors, women of fashion and so on. And because Sigmund Freud was my uncle, I had been exposed at home to discoveries about the mind and individual and group behavior. This, no doubt, prepared me for an interest in the social sciences.

This was my background when I joined the Committee on Public Information in 1917 and, like my colleagues, found new public relations horizons being opened by the requirements of the war.

No previous training or formulated knowledge was available to the Committee, but it improvised effectively. There were few airplanes in those days, no radios, no talking movies, no television, no transatlantic telephones, and no flying across oceans. No literature on mass communications, social psychology, anthropology, sociology, or social psychology provided us with background

principles. We had no precedents to go by. But every existing channel of mass communication was used to the full—posters, billboards, advertising, exhibits, pamphlets, newspapers, and envelope stuffers. New methods were tried, too.

In *Mobilizing Civilian America*, Tobin and Bidwell assess the work of the Committee:

The willingness of Americans to bear the war's burden was strengthened by the work of the Committee on Public Information which stimulated the people to put forth efforts far in excess of what could have been exacted by legal compulsion. The conscription of opinion, like the draft of soldiers, outran the organization of the industrial machine. Established in the week of America's declaration of war, the Committee mobilized all available means of publicity. It bombarded the public unceasingly with enthusiastic reports on the nation's colossal war effort and with contrasts of our war aims and those of our allies, with the war aims of the Central Powers. Dissenting voices were stilled, either by agreement with the press or by the persuasive action of the agents of the Department of Justice. The formidable body of consent resulting from this effort was an effective aid in the mobilizing of industry; it buttressed the power of the government with the solid support of public opinion.

Tobin and Bidwell ascribe to the work of the "group of zealous, amateur propagandists organized by Mr. Creel" the revolutionary change in the sentiment of the nation. He carried out, they say, what was "perhaps the most effective job of large-scale war propaganda which the world had ever witnessed." Intellectual and emotional bombardment aroused Americans to a pitch of enthusiasm. The bombardment came at people from all sides—advertisements, news, volunteer speakers, posters, schools, theaters; millions of homes displayed service flags. The war aims and ideals were continually projected to the eyes and ears of the populace. These high-pressure methods were new at the time, but have become usual since then.

The Committee collected news from all available government sources and distributed it in every possible way. In addition, there was a daily newspaper, the official bulletin. Also, there were mat services to smaller newspapers. Motion pictures and war exhibits were brought to all parts of the country; Four Minute Men addressed moving picture audiences throughout the country; soldiers addressed mass meetings and street rallies. The foreign-born were made the subject of adult education programs. The American

Alliance for Labor and Democracy was organized to work among laboring men.

Critics charged that sometimes the Committee's volunteers got hysterical, but, after all, hysteria was generally prevalent at the time. Reports that the Germans were beasts and Huns were generally accepted. The most fantastic atrocity stories were believed. After the war there was widespread disillusion with and reaction against propaganda. The American people resented their own wartime gullibility.

I have already mentioned a book called *Words That Won The War* which pays tribute to the skill of Woodrow Wilson and George Creel in influencing public opinion. Later, the slogan—equally true—that “Words Won the War but Lost the Peace” came to remind us never to place too great a reliance on words. Words may win your war and lose your peace. In public relations, as in all other pursuits, actions speak louder than words.

Public relations activities in World War I never attained their full potentialities. They were never really co-ordinated or integrated in any country and were largely a matter of improvisation. There was (and this happens even today) a greater recognition of the importance of a sound approach in the lower echelons than in the highest. In the United States, military intelligence had a psychological subsection that functioned in the field of propaganda. One of its activities was sending pamphlets across enemy lines by balloons and even by cannon; and censorship, which is the reverse of propaganda, was used here.

Germany, in 1914, already had a division of the press in the foreign office under Erzeberger; a navy press section under Admiral von Tirpitz; and the Imperial General Staff had a Section 3B, Politics and Intelligence, under Colonel Nicolai, to deal with the press and maintain the morale of the country and the army. These groups functioned until 1917, when a central organization, the *Deutsche Kriegsnachrichten*, was created, charged with morale of the army and the population. It handled pamphlets, meetings, recreation, movies, theater, newspapers, libraries for the troops, and also co-operated with civilian authorities.

In France there was no unified organization. There were four services, concerned with foreign propaganda, French press, study of foreign journals, and psychological war against the enemy.

In Britain, propaganda was slow to develop and grew out of private voluntary groups—the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organization and the Parliamentary War Aims Committee. The first bureau of propaganda for war, known as Wellington House, was the only British organization aimed at foreign countries. Its bureau of press distributed information to the foreign office, to diplomats, Wellington House promoted the British cause all over the globe.

Wellington House released the Bryce Report on German atrocities in Belgium and elsewhere and translated it into thirty languages—with important later effects. Propaganda intended for the United States was carried on under Sir Gilbert Parker and Sir Geoffrey Butler. It was not until 1918 that Lord Northcliffe became director of propaganda for enemy countries under the authority of the Prime Minister and the war cabinet. Domestic propaganda was in the hands of the National War Aims Committee.

Wartime propaganda accelerated the development of opinion molding. People were more aware than ever of the importance of public opinion in the modern world and the importance of winning its support. The propaganda of the reformers and muckrakers had compelled business to adopt a new policy toward public opinion. Now world-wide war, with democracy and civilization at stake, made it necessary for government to enter the field of public relations on a grand scale.

Toward the close of World War I, propaganda was given a new turn by the Russian Revolution of 1917. Socialist ideas had affected sections of public opinion in Europe and America ever since Marx and Engels had launched their Communist Manifesto in 1848. These operated within the framework of existing society, but when the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, seized power in Russia, a new situation was created. The Soviet government and the Third or Communist International, set up in 1919, launched a worldwide propaganda campaign, an attack on the economic and political institutions of Europe and the United States. When World War I was over, America was ready to return to its normal pursuits. Amidst these pursuits, as

they developed in the twenties, American public relations made great advances.

## 9

### ***The Rise of a New Profession, 1919–29***

FROM the end of World War I to the stock market crash, basic trends and events hastened the development of public relations. The country had moved toward greater liberalism in the late nineties. The people's power had manifested itself in many ways. Now, still greater social responsibility on the part of men in power was demanded by the public. The weapons of publicity were gaining strength. The public's voice had become more audible as a result of the faster and more extensive mass communication that modern technology had created. Speedier and cheaper multiplication of ideas by printing presses accelerated the process.

To understand developments in public relations from 1919 to 1929, it might be well to glance at the background of the period. Harding's "Back to Normalcy" was followed by "Keep Cool with Coolidge," and the slogan "The Business of America Is Business." These, in turn, were followed by the era of the "Great Engineer," Herbert Hoover. Rising price levels heightened economic activity. Increased competition to attract the consumer's interest and his dollar characterized the period. America was on its greatest, speediest upward economic swing. Booms zinged along, boom after boom—the Florida boom, the advertising boom, the stock market speculative boom, the expansion of the investment trusts, the amalgamation of big business into bigger business. The battle for more profits and "bigger and better business" cut across the country between industries and within them. Oranges fought prunes, tea battled coffee, wool clashed with cotton. Large and small aggregates of business recognized the need to persuade the publics on which they depended for business and good will. During the war, these publics had been wooed effectively by government. Now the activity of persuasion was in the hands of an expanding profession. Men and movements of all kinds decided that perhaps words could win their wars, too, in the battle of publicity and of the newer public relations now emerging.

An important factor in developing the climate of public opinion was the demonstration to the peoples of the world in World War I that wars are fought with words and ideas as well as with arms and bullets. Businessmen, private institutions, great universities—all kinds of groups—became conditioned to the fact that they needed the public; that the great public could now perhaps be harnessed to their cause as it had been harnessed during the war to the national cause, and that the same methods could do the job.

Now the publicity man was to come into his own on a much broader basis. As Roger Babson stated. “The war taught us the power of propaganda.” Everybody could see that publicity had helped to win the war. As a result, the postwar period ushered in a conscious expansion of the field. Some of the men who had worked on the Committee on Public Information realized this fact, as did others who had been engaged in various wartime promotional activities for the government. When they left government service and returned to civilian life, these men applied the publicity methods they had learned during the war, refining their methods and broadening the scope of their operations as the expanding postwar economy and the increasing complexity of their publics demanded.

There was, for instance, John Price Jones, a former New York newspaperman. As a member of the Committee on Public Information, he had successfully carried out the spirited Liberty Loan selling campaigns through mass persuasion and distribution. After the war, he opened an office and applied his technique to raising funds for universities, such as Harvard, by the same methods and with equal success. Today these methods and techniques are standard practices all over America.

When I left the CPI in 1919, it was logical that, with my prewar experience in publicity and press agency and my wartime CPI experience, I should follow a similar pattern of activity. With Doris E. Fleischman as my associate, I began working in the public relations field. We called our activity “publicity direction.” That was the best name we could think of at the time. We knew the term “press agent,” of course, but it had bad connotations. “Publicity” was too indefinite. At least “direction” seemed to give greater dignity to our work and



indicated that we were interested in the planning and directing phases of the field—the broad approach to the problem.

From 1919 to 1923 our work broadened out, and we came to call it “counsel on public relations,” coining the term from the two expressions that best conveyed our meaning. The phrase “public relations” had already been used by the public utilities and railroads. We combined the idea of public relations with the idea of adviser, substituting the term “counsel” for “adviser” because of its professional connotations.

A full-scale history of modern public relations cannot, of course, be presented in a single chapter. But the development of the field can be illustrated by incidents from our own experience—incidents which I knew directly and on which I am free to draw. These activities will not give a complete picture. They are presented, rather, as a microcosm, the development of which may serve as an index to the general situation. In this connection the reader should keep in mind that at this time we ourselves were groping our way toward present-day public relations, the two-way-street aspect of which had not yet been recognized or developed.

One of our first clients in 1919 was the War Department, which retained us to help with a publicity campaign designed to deal with the problem of fitting former servicemen into America’s everyday life. This problem had become a matter of grave national concern in the spring and summer of that year.

As one result of directed national publicity for the War Department’s re-employment service, the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce appealed for help to harvest the wheat crop in Kansas. On behalf of the War Department, we prepared a statement about this opportunity for employment. This statement was carried throughout the country as a news dispatch by the Associated Press, and within four days after its appearance the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce wired the War Department that enough labor had been secured to complete the harvest.

To publicize the need for reintegrating former servicemen in the normal economic and social relations of the United States, we appealed to the personal and local pride of American businessmen, emphasizing their obligation of honor to rehire their former

employees when they were discharged from army, navy, marine, or government service. A citation, to be signed by the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Assistant to the Secretary of War, was prepared for display in the stores and factories of employers who assured the War and Navy Departments that they would rehire former employees mustered out of service. We dramatized this citation by arranging with the Fifth Avenue Association to have its members display it simultaneously in their stores. This concerted action on the part of a group of leading businessmen influenced others throughout the United States to re-employ discharged servicemen.

In 1919 also, the country of Lithuania sought to become an independent nation, and we were engaged to advise the Lithuanian National Council on ways and means of achieving popular sympathy in and official recognition from the United States. The first problem was to overcome America's indifference to and ignorance about Lithuania and its desires. Here we resorted to the segmental approach that I had introduced into the publicity activities of Diaghileff's Russian Ballet. An exhaustive study was made of Lithuania from its remote and contemporary history to its present-day marriage customs and popular recreations. This material was divided into various categories, and each category was addressed to the public to which it was likely to appeal.

Many media of communication were employed; to inform ethnologists about Lithuania's ethnic origins, linguists about the development of its language from Sanskrit, sports fans about its athletic contests, women about its clothes, jewelry users about its amber. And while music lovers were given concerts of Lithuanian music, United States senators and congressmen were furnished facts about the country that would give them a basis for favorable action. All avenues of approach to the public were used to arouse interest and stimulate action—the mails, the lecture platform, mass meetings, petitions, committees, newspaper advertising, the radio, and motion pictures.

As a result of these activities, the public, the press, and government officials became familiar with the character, customs, problems, and aspirations of Lithuania. And Lithuania obtained

recognition. Someone called the campaign that achieved this goal “advertising a nation to freedom.” The term “advertising” was still used as a synonym for publicity or public relations.

We were also employed by the United States Radium Corporation, which had mines in Colorado, to acquaint the public with the discovery that radium was useful in cancer therapy. At our suggestion, the corporation founded the first national radium bank in order to dramatize the fact that radium ought to be available to all physicians who treated cancer patients.

In 1920, when radio was still new, the Intercity Radio Corporation, which planned to open a service between New York, Detroit, and Cleveland, engaged us to help win public interest and support for the project. An inauguration ceremony was arranged, at which the mayors of the three cities connected for the first time by radio officiated; and the first messages relayed over commercial intercity radio waves were sent and received by the mayors. The occasion aroused nation-wide interest in the new wireless service.

That was the year when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held its convention in Atlanta, Georgia, dramatizing its fight against lynching by conducting it from the heart of the South. We aided the NAACP in this battle, working closely with James Weldon Johnson, secretary of the association, and Walter White, then his assistant.

The “overt act,” a new concept in the early twenties, was applied when we were asked to help the National Council of American Importers and Traders win public support in its fight against the American valuation section of the Fordney tariff, which, owing to European currency inflation, would have cut down imports to the United States. To dramatize the adverse effects that American valuation would have on the American consumer, the Consumer’s Committee of Women Opposed to American Valuation opened on Fifth Avenue an exhibit directed to women. The overt act that made this exhibit news was that its doors were unlocked to the public by Olive Whitman, daughter of Charles S. Whitman, then governor of New York.

Another example of developments at this time was the campaign of the Beech-Nut Packing Company to establish in the public mind

the fact that the name of its product was synonymous with bacon. It was decided to popularize the slogan "Bring Home the Beech-Nut" as a substitute for the folk-saying "bringing home the bacon" by offering awards to the company's salesmen for the best sales made throughout the country during the month of August. To assure the success of the "Bring Home the Beech-Nut" contest, a number of nationally known sales managers were chosen to act as judges. Thousands of salesmen competed for the prize, and the slogan was spread all over the United States.

In the early twenties we were also consulted by the Hotel Association of New York in regard to counteracting a decline in business. It was believed that the postwar crime wave was keeping visitors away from the city, but our survey revealed that the chief cause of trouble was the common out-of-town belief that the metropolis was cold and inhospitable. As a result of the survey, representatives of New York's leading industrial, civic, and social groups formed the Welcome Stranger Committee. The friendly, hospitable aims of this committee, broadcast throughout the country, helped to re-establish New York's good reputation, and congratulatory editorials appeared in both the urban and the rural press.

Another early activity of our organization was aiding in removing taxicabs of New York from the jurisdiction of a lax, ineffectual license department to the jurisdiction of the Police Department, which enjoyed the confidence of the public and enforced the law properly.

These scattered examples selected from our experience in the early nineteen twenties will perhaps indicate the extent to which the field was changing. There was a growing feeling that, in public relations, words alone were not enough. To arouse and interest the public, words had to be backed by deeds. Publicity direction was becoming more than the use of the mimeograph machine. It was beginning to mean advising the client on the development of attitudes, directions, and even policies that he should follow in order to build good will with the public and to realize his social objectives more effectively.

By analyzing our experience, we came to see the importance of the two-way-street aspect of public relations. That principle was formulated in a book, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, written by me and

published by Boni and Liveright in 1923. It was the first book to deal with the scope and functions of the public relations counsel. Some of the ideas it explored will bear repeating here because of the impact they had on the public relations field, on persons who were thinking about that field, and on us, who were actively practicing in the field.

I believed then and still believe now that public relations can be carried on effectively only on a professional, ethical, and socially responsible basis. Public relations is not a one-way street in which leadership manipulates the public and public opinion. It is a two-way street in which leadership and the public find integration with each other and in which objectives and goals are predicated on a coincidence of public and private interest. At the same time, the counsel on public relations must not forget his obligations to the public as a special pleader.

In that book I undertook further to describe and analyze the scope and functions of the public relations counsel, the increasing importance of the profession, and the function of the special pleader. I discussed a social-science approach to the field, dealing with the nature and dynamics of public opinion, the interaction of public opinion with the forces that help to make it, the relation of public motivation to the work of the public relations counsel, and the application of these principles to public relations. I also discussed public relations techniques and methods, the group and the herd as basic mechanisms of public change, and outlined practicable methods for modifying group points of view.

Just how new the modern profession of public relations counsel was in the early twenties and how much remained to be done to gain understanding for it may be gathered from the reactions which *Crystallizing Public Opinion* evoked. These ranged all the way from the acid comment by Melville E. Stone, counselor for the Associated Press, that he knew of "no such profession unless it be a self-constituted one" to Glenn Frank's and H. L. Mencken's perception that something new and important was developing in the field of public opinion.

The publication of this volume did not go unnoticed in business circles. Large corporations called upon us in increasing numbers for advice on matters of policy as well as informational activities. This

was a challenge which we had long been preparing to meet and which we were eager to accept.

Continuing my attempts to clarify the field and to widen public understanding of it, I conducted a course in public relations at New York University in 1923—the first course in this subject ever offered at any institution of higher learning. It gave students an opportunity to become acquainted with the field; and by giving public relations academic standing, it aided the development of the profession.

In 1924 the overt act technique reached the White House. We were working with New York's Police Commissioner Rhineland Waldo in his campaign through the Non-Partisan Committee for the re-election of Calvin Coolidge as president of the United States. We wanted to make it clear to the country in some dramatic way that Coolidge was not the cold, silent iceberg he was supposed to be, that he was really human. It was decided that the President should entertain at breakfast at the White House, his guests for griddle cakes and bacon being Al Jolson, the Dolly Sisters, Charlotte Greenwood, and other stage and screen stars. Accounts of this event hit the front pages of newspapers throughout the United States, presenting Coolidge in warmer, more human colors. It also set a pattern for that was the first time a president of the United States had entertained actors and actresses at the White House at breakfast.

Another example of the overt act technique was the nationwide soap-sculpture contest that Procter and Gamble conducted in 1924 at our suggestion. Thousands of children participated in this contest, which roused interest in art, conditioned young children to cleanliness, and effectively coincided private with public interest. The contest is still held annually.

The following year we extended our activities to Europe. Establishing an office in Paris, we made studies of the public relations problems of a number of European industrialists. Among other things, we were engaged as public relations counsel for the Paris Exposition, which was intended to overcome the disillusionment with the French that many Americans had experienced in World War I and to give France new significance in the public mind.

In 1926, publicity was a factor in saving the millinery industry. "Strategic style propaganda warned off disastrous shift to felt hats," said *Editor and Publisher*. "Artists and style authorities aided campaign," and *Editor and Publisher* discussed the methods we had used to stop the trend to felts and the move to larger hats.

The overt act was still being emphasized in our activities to gain public recognition of the organization creating it. One such activity was a French exhibition of works by American artists that I organized for Jacques Seligmann, a firm with galleries in New York and Paris. The exhibit aroused interest on the Continent, as it did in the United States, because France, up to that time, had not thus honored American artists, and naturally the art dealers who sponsored it acquired good will and enhanced reputation. Most of the great American artists then in France exhibited—Bob Chandler, Sterling Calder, and Jo Davidson among them.

At this time we were also working with a large tobacco company to effect changes in women's fashions in order to facilitate the sale of its cigarette package. We aided luggage manufacturers in doing away with the tradition of scant luggage. We were counseling the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company and Shelton Looms. And we gave public relations advice to a new industry, one of the most powerful means of communication ever invented by man—radio.

Radio was currently facing a problem analogous to the one that public relations had itself experienced. The broad public still thought of radio sets as gadgets for the lower socio-economic groups. We worked with the Columbia Broadcasting Company.

We also initiated a new radio practice in 1928 while acting as public relations counsel for the Dodge Brothers Corporation. When the company launched its new Victory-6, the event was dramatized by the first national radio hookup in history in which screen stars, including Charlie Chaplin, participated. Since the screen was silent, the national hookup gave the public a chance to hear the voices of its favorite performers for the first time. The impact of this broadcast was so great that thousands of persons all over the country stormed into the showrooms of Dodge dealers to see the new Victory-6. The performance that accomplished this goal reached the greatest radio

audience any commercial broadcast had commanded up to that time.

A high point of our 1929 activities was Light's Golden Jubilee, designed to emphasize the significance of the electric light to American and world civilization. Committees were formed the country over to promote the celebration, holidays were declared, speeches were made, and a commemorative postage stamp was issued by the United States. This stamp honored the inventor of the electric light, Thomas A. Edison, by carrying a picture of a Mazda lamp. Edison, with the assistance of President Herbert Hoover and Henry Ford, reconstructed the electric light at the old laboratory. Edison's voice broke as he read a brief statement in acknowledgement of the tribute paid him. The Jubilee was also marked by Henry Ford's invitation to hundreds of prominent persons to be his guests for several days during the opening of Greenfield Village. And to dramatize the age he had destroyed, Ford had horses and buggies call for his guests.

While the Jubilee dramatized the importance of electric light, it had, in addition, a marked impact on the development of public relations. The participation of President Hoover, Henry Ford, Thomas A. Edison, and many other personages in the Jubilee gave public relations a new meaning and new status.

The action of the new Real Estate Securities Exchange in engaging us to advise them was another indication of the expansion of public relations in the period. Great baking companies, too, were eager to improve their relations with their consumers, employees, purveyors, and the government, and they sought advice on how to deal with these groups in the changing world of the middle nineteen twenties. At the same time, oil companies, couturiers, manufacturers of food and home furnishings, real estate firms, and art dealers wanted advice on how to orient themselves effectively in our complex society. Before they took action, they wanted to have some idea what effect that action might have. They were learning to formulate and plan action that would ensure a desirable result.

There were still thousands of press agents and publicity men attached to groups and enterprises that had used them for decades—hotels, steamship companies, theaters, circuses, and other



segments of the entertainment field—who followed the old patterns of press agency. But business was turning elsewhere.

This advance in the recognition of the importance of public relations made itself felt in the activities of large companies, which engaged in one kind of overt act or another to win public understanding or support, employed counsel on public relations, and appointed “good-will” or “luncheon” vice-presidents. In the late twenties, industrial leaders set the pace in public relations; others followed the new trend as best they could. Activities in two leading industries illustrate the way in which public relations was expanding.

Among the earliest companies to transform the publicity and propaganda lessons of World War I into broader uses for peacetime were the public utilities, the streetcars, and the railroads. As these enterprises emerged from the war, they appointed assistants to presidents in charge of publicity or public relations. To a great extent, the function of these executives was still to deal with words. These words were designed to influence the public without necessarily involving any basic change of attitude or action on the part of the company.

As early as 1922 the motion picture industry lured Will Hays away from the high government office of postmaster general to head what came to be called the Hays Office. By 1924 the industry was maturely conscious of its obligations to the public, and representatives of more than sixty film companies met in conference to select an executive secretary to act as liason officer in the Hays Office. This organization functioned on a two-way basis designed to integrate the industry with the public. Every week members of the executive committee were shown a program of new films. Favorable and unfavorable criticisms were reported to the home offices of the motion picture companies, thus giving film makers a chance to learn what was acceptable and what was not. As a result, film entertainment was greatly improved, and during the two years in which this plan functioned the public was more friendly to the motion picture industry.

That an emerging public relations concept was under way was also indicated in 1922 in a statement issued by Colonel Robert Stewart, chairman of the board of directors of the Standard Oil

Company of Indiana. "It is not enough to advertise a product," Colonel Stewart said "Public ought to be acquainted with the honesty and high character of the institution back of the product.

"I have always believed that one of the biggest jobs of the head of a business is to undertake definitely to deserve favorable public opinion and then to go out and win it.

"This is not a job that applies only to the very big corporations like ours with assets of hundreds of millions of dollars; it applies to the smaller corporations, too. If you don't have the public for you, a seriously large part of it is likely to be against you, and no business can continue to exist successfully unless a large part of the public is for it."

Colonel Stewart was speaking for the oil interests, which still had reason to smart from the challenge of the muckrakers and government investigations prior to World War I. He confused publicity techniques with public relations; yet his statement of what was to be achieved fits easily into any broad definition of public relations.

In 1924 the oil industry took steps to integrate itself with the public. A resolution passed by the board of directors of the American Petroleum Institute called for the spending of \$100,000 a year to tell the public the story of oil. The use in the resolution of the term "public relations," now gradually coming into vogue, was a step forward. But the basic concept of what public relations activity is was still antiquated; it was thought of simply as the distribution of information. The board's resolution recommended the appointment of a public relations committee, which, under the Institute's auspices, would assemble facts about the petroleum industry from all reliable sources and distribute these facts to the industry and the public.

It is difficult to present a clear picture of the growth and development of public relations through the activities of one organization or even through the field as a whole. It is necessary in addition to examine the discussions of the functions of public relations and the development of the nomenclature used in connection with it. Without a definite idea of the dynamics in these two areas, it is difficult to appraise its activities fairly and accurately.

In 1908 the American Newspaper Publishers Association, under the prodding of Don Seitz of the *New York World*, initiated a campaign against so-called free publicity or free advertising. Abuses of these activities, as we have seen, had grown up from 1830 on, when advertising was a relatively new force and free space was frequently offered with it. The ANPA campaign was dropped to some extent during World War I, but when that war was over, the battle of the newspapers versus the press agent and publicity man cropped up again. It was encouraged by various trade papers such as *Editor and Publisher*, *Printers' Ink*, and *The Fourth Estate*. There was little distinction, if any, in the mind of the editor between legitimate news and illegitimate publicity, puffs, and press agency. The words "propaganda" and "publicity" had been given great play in World War I, mostly with bad implications. In the postwar period, the discussion centered on wartime meanings.

Meanwhile more and more industries were moving in the direction of public relations. One issue of the bulletin of the American Newspaper Publishers Association in 1924 attacked no less than twelve businesses and groups on the old ground of free puffs. The ANPA's attitude was an echo of the nineteenth century; the activities it attacked were indications of the new trend. Thus the United States Lines was attacked for setting up a "press aid department"; the Society for Electricity Development for offering publishers the use of its publicity service; the American Bankers Association for submitting human-interest stories to the press in order to build good will for bankers; the J. Walter Thompson Company for sending out fashion news on behalf of a client, the Butterick Company; the India Tea interests and the Eastman Kodak Company and Procter and Gamble for sending out news releases; the National Council for Prevention of War for its nationwide campaign to win support for its cause; the Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company for its Andy Gump cookie campaign; the Cheney Brothers for their style service; the National Association of Insurance Agencies and N. W. Ayer and Son for various publicity campaigns.

All this indicates, on the one hand, the continuing prejudices of certain newspaper publishers in the early nineteen twenties against a type of publicity that was to become accepted practice. On the

other hand, it gives us some idea, however sketchy, of the range of publicity and public relations techniques being used by American groups of various kinds—techniques which were to expand greatly in the second half of the decade.

It showed, too, immense progress over the primitive concepts of public relations with which the twentieth century had opened. But there was as yet no general understanding of the principle that, in the interest of effective public relations, a client's policies and practices might have to be changed fundamentally. Public relations was still generally understood to mean the use of the overt act to build good will, rather than allowing basic policy and practice to be the determining factor in winning public understanding and support.

The press agent was still under attack. Typical of the attacks was an editorial in the February 19, 1920, issue of *Printers' Ink*, which, like many other statements of the period, argued that "all free publicity is necessarily surreptitious and that it can function only through back-alley approaches to the editors of second-rate publications."

To this unfounded charge I replied in an article entitled "The Press Agent Has His Day," which appeared in *Printers' Ink*, February 26, 1920. I pointed out that newspapers throughout the country, including the leading New York papers, depended to a certain extent on publicity organizations for news that would not otherwise come to their attention, and that they were keenly appreciative of the publicity man's efforts. "The most successful American corporations and individuals have, for a long time, been employing publicity experts to present their point of view to the public and are now represented either by a personal publicity man on the staff or by a publicity organization," I added. "An efficient publicity man must believe firmly in the value of advertising. No honest publicity man undertakes, under any circumstances, to promise the printing or appearance of his material. What the lawyer does for his client in the court of law, we do for our clients in the court of public opinion through the daily and periodical press."

Perhaps the lack of a clear-cut terminology for public relations at that time had something to do with these attacks. This shortcoming can, I think, be illustrated very effectively through the title of a book.

In 1920, George Creel told the amazing story of the Committee on Public Information, which during the war had carried the gospel of American democracy to every corner of the globe, and he called his story of America's public relations *How We Advertised America*.

The American Manufacturers Export Association in the same year published a similar account of the war activities of the Export Division of the Committee on Public Information, which I had headed, speaking of "publicity" in international trade, with no reference to public relations. At the same time, this article, which described how the United States influenced public opinion during the war, foreshadowed the type of activity that was later to be carried on by the Voice of America. The article urged "a building up of a background of public interest" in the United States and the expansion of the campaign abroad "by experts who are competent to see to it that it is properly prepared in the different languages and that it reaches the proper media of distribution abroad via foreign correspondents, news services, syndicates, photo agencies, and important foreign newspapers."

As I have related, in 1919 we called our organization "publicity direction." In 1920–21, Ivy Lee, in his *Notes and Clippings*, used various terms to define his organization—publicity adviser, publicity expert, publicity director, profession of publicity. In 1920 various companies had assistants to the president in charge of public relations. The following year the growing interest in the field was reflected in a list of references to publicity, with special mention of press agents, published by the Library of Congress. A bulletin issued by Ivy Lee and Associates in 1921 was titled *Public Relations*. That year, too, "counsel on public relations" was used as the term to define our activity in *Contact*, a booklet which we published to interpret the new field.

"In 1922," says Eric Goldman in *Two-Way Street*, "apparently the first use of public relations counsel was at the time of the Bernays wedding, when the groom described himself by that phrase." That the term then had great novelty was indicated in a 1922 newspaper account of a Caruso lawsuit. The story was headlined: "Find New Profession in Caruso Suit Trial." The story went on: "The profession of counsel on public relations made its bow in the Supreme Court

before Justice Vernon M. Davis yesterday, when . . . Edward L. Bernays . . . introduced the new profession by declaring on the witness stand that he was such a counselor.”

By 1922, Herbert Bayard Swope, executive manager of the *New York World*, was deflating the bold cry of *Editor and Publisher* that all free publicity and all propaganda were not newsworthy. In a talk before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, he said that the element for the press to consider in publicity was that what is printed should possess news quality. “Nor do I think we should be particularly worried by propaganda,” Swope concluded. “We, each of us, have a standard of judgment whereby we can roughly separate proper from impropaganda.”

His statement reflected the growing feeling that “propaganda,” which had acquired bad odor as a result of German propaganda aimed at the United States in World War I, might be re-established as a word with good connotations. This thought was echoed by the *Scientific American* in this way: “*Propaganda* in its proper meaning is a perfectly wholesome word of honest parentage and with an honorable history.” The *New York Times*, too, joined in: “That propaganda has come to be a word of ill repute reflects on the intelligence of the reading public. No man can open his mouth on a subject which affects his own interest without emitting propaganda, no matter how impartial he may try to be. Most of us unconsciously recognize this by our rule of thumb method of judging what we hear: if it agrees with our prejudices, it is true; if not, it is propaganda. So the distinction between propaganda and information is logically almost impossible to draw, though in practice there is a difference.”

In that year, also, Walter Lippman, in *Public Opinion*, gave new meaning to the discussion of the field by introducing the term “stereotype” as a picture of things we have in our heads. This gave a broader background to the meaning of public opinion and what tended to build it up.

In the year 1922 the distinction between “counsel on public relations” and “publicity man” was being recognized. The recognition was sketchy, but from an authoritative source, the *Fourth Estate*, which said editorially:

“Counsel on public relations” and “director of public relations” are two terms that the newspaperman is encountering more often every day. There is a familiar tinge to them in a way but in justice to the men who bear these titles, and to the concerns that employ them, it should be said that they are—or can be—disassociated from the old idea of “publicity man.”

The very fact that many of the largest corporations in the country are recognizing the need of maintaining right relationships with the public is alone important enough to assure a fair and even favorable hearing for their public relations departments.

Whether a man is really entitled to the appellation “counsel on public relations,” or whether he should merely be called “publicity man,” rests entirely with the individual and the firm that employs him. As we see it, a man who is really counsel or director of public relations has one of the most important jobs on the roster of any concern; but a man who merely represents the old idea of getting something for nothing from publishers is about *passe*.

No one kept track of the changes in public relations nomenclature more closely than the indefatigable H. L. Mencken. In 1925 his *Americana* used “press agent” and “publicist” interchangeably. “Every politician, movie actor, actress and prize fight,” he said, “has a publicist.” In 1926 the first edition of Mencken’s *American Language* took account of the new manifestation in the field, but treated the change as a mere euphemism. “A press agent,” he said, “is now called a publicist, a press representative or a counsel on public relations, just as a ‘realtor’ and ‘mortician’ are euphemisms for ‘real estate man’ and ‘undertaker.’” Twenty years later, however, in Supplement No. 1 of *American Language*, Mencken devoted two pages to the term “public relations counsel,” incorporating our definition of it.

The growing recognition of the development of the profession and the new nomenclature is further demonstrated by R. H. Wilder and K. L. Buell’s book, *Publicity*, published in 1923. The authors envisaged the growth and development of the field. They referred to the frequent use of “publicity agent” and “publicity manager”; and said that some financial and commercial organizations gave these people such titles as “good will engineer” or “councillor in public relations,” but that there were others who seemed so afraid of being accused of bidding for popularity that they gave their publicity manager the all-embracing title of “vice-president.” Their discussion

indicates there was still a lack of true understanding of the two-way function of public relations.

Comment on public relations swung between old-fashioned concepts and recognition of new developments. Abram Lipsky's book, *Man the Puppet: The Art of Controlling Minds*, published in 1925, saw the public relations counsel only as a new Pied Piper who was the old press agent in new guise. Two important newspapers, on the other hand, recognized the new trend. In 1924 the *Chicago Tribune* editorially emphasized that public relations was becoming a profession, an art, and a science and urged the business executive that in "seeking the co-operation of the public he should first of all give the fullest co-operation to his public relations department. This," the editorial concluded, "means utter frankness, access to all facts, and speed." So, too, the *New York Herald* of February 11, 1926, declared that "the old-time press agent has gone," and that with the emergence of the public relations counsel there was a refinement not only of title but of methods.

To clarify the situation, our own office attempted to work out a definition of "counsel on public relations" that might be accepted by the profession and the public. We published our definition in the form of a full advertisement that appeared in the January 26, 1927, issue of *Editor and Publisher*. It read as follows:

COUNSEL ON PUBLIC RELATIONS—A DEFINITION

What is a counsel on public relations and what are his relations to the press of this country? A counsel on public relations directs, advises upon, and supervises those activities of his client which affect or interest the public. He interprets the client to the public and the public to his client.

He concerns himself with every contact with the public wherever and whenever it may arise. He creates circumstances and events in advising a client upon his public activities. And he disseminates information about circumstances in helping his client to make his case known to his public.

This was again a reaffirmation of the two-fold function of the public relations counsel, whose profession it is to integrate groups, industries, and individuals with society, to disseminate facts and points of view to and from society.

As the field of public relations continued to expand and mature, an attempt was made in 1927 to organize public relations men into a



professional association. This attempt, however, was abortive; it failed because it received too much premature publicity.

In 1927, *Editor and Publisher* was particularly annoyed at the claim we made that “the public relations counsel is justified in affecting circumstances before they happen to make the news.” And in the same year it reported that the ANPA was initiating a new war on press agents, with S. E. Thomason, publisher of the *Tampa Tribune*, launching the attack. Conversely, the interest sociologists were beginning to take in the subject was shown in that same year. In a topical summary of current literature in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Robert S. Park, in a bibliography of the newspaper press, said: “No account of the newspaper in its relation to public affairs would be complete without some reference to the *press agent*.” Evidence that “propaganda” was not the “horrid” word it had become during World War I and that attempts were being made to establish its better meaning was indicated the same year in a report by the Universal Trade Press, “The Verdict of Public Opinion on Propaganda.” The verdict was favorable.

Once again I tried to present the two-way principle of public relations in an article entitled “This Business of Propaganda,” which appeared in the September, 1928, issue of the *Independent*. In this article I emphasized that professional ethics required the propagandist or the public relations counsel “never to represent or plead in the court of public opinion a cause which he believes is socially unsound; never to take the cases of conflicting clients,” and always to maintain “the same standards of truth with media as govern the habits of the world he lives in.”

The year 1928 also saw the first recognition of public relations on the part of the social sciences. The May issue of the *American Journal of Sociology* broke ground in this respect with my article on “Manipulating Public Opinion.” It discussed the problem from the standpoint of attempting to modify attitudes of the public, with particular reference to overcoming “the inertia of established traditions and prejudices.”

That was the year I published my second book—*Propaganda*. Its title was significant in two ways: for one thing, toward the end of the twenties the term “propaganda” had lost the negative connotation it

had acquired in World War I; also, the emphasis of public relations at that time was more on articulation than on integration. Yet the two-way principle was stressed, too.

“If the public is better informed about the processes of its own life,” I wrote in *Propaganda*, “it will be so much the more receptive to reasonable appeals to its own interests. No matter how sophisticated, how cynical the public may become about publicity methods, it must respond to the basic appeals. . . . If the public becomes more intelligent in its commercial demands, commercial firms will meet the new standards.”

As for articulation: “The new propaganda, having regard to the constitution of society as a whole, not infrequently serves to focus and realize the desires of the masses. A desire for a specific reform, however widespread, cannot be translated into action until it is made articulate, and until it has exerted sufficient pressure upon the proper law-making bodies. Millions of housewives may feel that manufactured goods deleterious to health should be prohibited. But there is little chance that their individual desires will be translated into effective legal form unless their half-expressed demand can be organized, made vocal, and concentrated upon the state legislature or the federal Congress in some mode which will produce the results of their desires. Whether they realize it or not, they call upon propaganda to organize and effectuate their demand.”

I also pointed out that “the new profession of public relations counsel has grown up because of the increasing complexity of modern life and the consequent necessity for making the actions of one part of the public understandable to other sectors of the public.”

A new note was introduced into public relations by urging that public relations practitioners be familiar with the findings of the social sciences, which do so much to clarify the nature of our society and the operations of public opinion. Since then, investigation into the social sciences has grown tremendously and new techniques have been developed for measuring public attitudes.

By this time there was already established in the minds of the leaders of American public opinion an understanding of the difference between a counsel on public relations and a publicity man. Also beginning to be understood was the two-fold function of the

counsel on public relations as we had tried to define it: an expert who advises his clients on attitudes and actions to fit them better into the society of which they are a part, a practitioner of the art of making known to the publics upon which the client is dependent his policies and practices.

In that same year, 1928, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company issued a report of a survey, entitled “Functions of a Public Relations Counsel,” which indicated that while public relations had gained great acceptance during this decade, there were still very few independent practitioners—it mentioned only Ivy Lee and ourselves.

And a year later, Earnest Elmo Calkins, distinguished advertising executive, writing in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, said: “The war taught us the new possibilities of molding public opinion, improved the machinery, and transformed the old-time press agent into the modern public relations counsel, whose clients are colleges, cathedrals, corporations, societies, and even nations.”

But Stanley Walker, city editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, still talked about “the expert tribe of propagandists and space grabbers.” And *Editor and Publisher* was still hammering away: Public relations counsel was a “dangerous device” because they were “irresponsible,” and “calculated to break down advertising practices.”

Through 1929, *Editor and Publisher* kept it up. One story was headlined “500 Grafters.” “One of the most disgraceful documents ever published in any industry recently was issued by ANPA. It listed 500 brand articles of merchandise which are being press agented in grafted space in newspapers.” The continuing battle was marked by the organization of a New York City Publishers Bureau to “stem the deluge of puffery,” as *Editor and Publisher* called it.

The *New Yorker* of November 9, 1929, was still unwilling to accept the title “counsel on public relations.” It had a new name—“specialist in making news events.” Other magazines, however, were quoting the concept outlined in *Propaganda*, that the function of a public relations counsel was “to interpret clients’ interest to the public and the public to the client.”

All in all, the decade from 1919 to 1929 marked a turning point in the development of public relations. As in the case of other fields, that development did not proceed in a straight line. Horse-and-buggy

ideas of propaganda and publicity left over from the nineties operated side by side with the whitewashing and “the public be informed” ideas of 1906 and the modern techniques stimulated by World War I propaganda and now applied on a broader basis to peacetime pursuits.

And, as is always true of any new process, there was a cultural time lag between the latest advances and earlier notions. That was why discussion of public relations in the nineteen twenties followed a zig-zag course. While certain corporations were moving toward a more advanced concept of public relations and this concept was being broadened through books and university courses, opposition to public relations continued along old lines on the assumption that it was nothing more than old-fashioned press agency.

But if developments in the twenties reveal anything, they reveal that public relations was a new field, distinct from old-fashioned press agency and publicity, and that important sections of American society—business, education, and the press—were beginning to recognize this fact.

## 10

### ***Public Relations Comes of Age, 1929–41***

THE PERIOD from 1929 to 1941 was marked by tremendous changes in this country and in the world. The stock market crash of 1929 rocked the country. The depression that followed was America's greatest economic crisis. President Hoover entered the White House in 1929 as the symbol of prosperity; he left it in 1933 as the symbol of debacle. He was followed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who occupied the White House for twelve years. Profound economic, social, and political changes in America and around the globe took place, accompanied by propaganda, publicity, and public relations on a scale never known before.

Carrying forward the tenets of the reform movements that had developed since the Civil War and had found expression in legislation under Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, and Wilson, President Franklin Roosevelt initiated far-reaching reforms. His actions precipitated nation-wide debate on such issues as the National Industrial Recovery Act, the New Deal, attempts to change the Supreme Court, the recognition of Russia, farm legislation, and other proposals.

Events abroad also had their impact on the United States, and public opinion was aroused on the issues raised by Russia, Japan, China, Hitler, Mussolini, collective security, and Spain. The conflicts of the era reached their climax in World War II, which broke out in Europe in the fall of 1939. Two years later, Pearl Harbor brought America into the greatest war in history.

The stock market crash and the Depression had a profound effect on public opinion and public relations. Public opinion had been steadily gaining importance since the turn of the century. In World War I that importance was recognized by America's leaders, both in government and in business. Now, however, the impact of the public upon the public relationship of government, business, labor, and other groups reached a new high.

One of the chief reasons for this was the fact that the Depression had destroyed the security of millions. Among the dispossessed farmers and along the lines of unemployed workers there was talk of revolution. Banks had failed, wiping out the savings of a lifetime, business enterprises had gone bankrupt, throwing millions into the street. John Steinbeck realized that the Depression brought into question all the basic assumptions of American society. In *The Grapes of Wrath* he presented the problem as the social welfare of the people versus the social situation. And the sense of insecurity of millions of Americans nourished three propaganda campaigns that swept the country.

Dr. Francis E. Townsend, with his Townsend Plan, founded in January, 1934, in California, gathered strong support for a pension plan to be undertaken by the federal government. Under this plan, the government was to pay \$200 monthly to every unemployed person of good character over sixty years of age, the stipend to be wholly spent before the next pay day. So widespread was the interest in this movement that it helped speed the passage through Congress of the Social Security Act in 1935, although the Townsend crusade itself was discredited after it had run its course.

Similarly, the Share the Wealth campaign of Senator Huey Long of Louisiana struck deep root in the Middle West and on the Pacific Coast. Long's proposal was a vague scheme for redistributing private fortunes so that every deserving family in the nation might have sufficient income to own a car, a home, and a radio. This movement affected the passage by Congress of an increased income tax on wealth in August, 1935.

The third campaign was initiated by Father Coughlin in Michigan in 1934. He organized the National Union for Social Justice, which advocated nationalization of banks, credit, utilities, and natural resources. In January, 1935, in a radio broadcast, many members of the National Union protested against America's joining the World Court. Then, in 1938, Father Coughlin formed an anti-Semitic organization called the Christian Front.

These three activities created throughout the country an awareness of the need for developing greater psychological security about economic security. It was only natural, in this crisis, for the

public to make its voice felt in political and social action. What the public did was to make business the scapegoat. It denounced the leaders of commerce, industry, and finance, charging them with direct responsibility for the Depression. This denunciation led to a profound change in the relations between business and the public.

The rising trend of business and of public relations after World War I had made the businessman the most important member of the community until 1929. His was the dominant voice in the market place of conflicting ideas. The public listened with the greatest respect to anything a tycoon had to say. He was considered a supreme authority not only on business but on art, religion, and music as well.

The Depression changed all this. As the White House and the public denounced bankers and industrialists for “making” the Depression, businessmen maintained a hurt silence. From 1929 to 1936 all the talking was done and the public relations was practiced by the critics of business. Business lost its voice and accepted the National Industrial Recovery Act.

Then in the middle thirties came the great turn. The Depression began to lift. The public began to regain its sense of security and its faith. Under these circumstances, business lost its fear and found its voice again. This turn of events had important consequences for the profession of public relations.

As a result of the Depression, public relations had greatly enlarged its activities. Business now realized that in addition to selling its products under the unfavorable conditions of economic decline, it needed also and above all to sell itself to the public, to explain its contributions to the entire economic system. Business recognized that if it did not do so, conflicting ideas might abolish or modify business itself. Then, too, the increasing attention given by universities, publicists, and writers to the importance of sound public relations in the maintenance of our system of enterprise made business aware of the need for modifying its attitudes and actions to conform to public demands, as well as for getting the public to understand its position.

Prior to the depression, the public relations activities of industry were, to a large extent, confined to trade associations and the larger

corporations. Trade associations that had specific problems of public relations—competition, taxes, sales difficulties—called in the expert on public opinion. The coal, meat, and oil industries were cases in point.

There was the tax problem, for instance—chain stores were faced by a wave of special taxes. And there were problems of markets, such as maintaining and developing markets for artificial flowers, concrete roads, velvets, or citrus fruits. Competing products, such as coal and oil, steel and wood, vegetable fat and animal fat, utilized public relations methods to make clear to the public the advantage of one over another.

The public relations activities of large corporations were of the same general character. They were faced with the problem of maintaining and developing leadership in their fields. They often used public relations techniques to develop members of their own organizations as symbols of leadership.

Prior to 1929 these two broad fields of action in industry kept the public relations men busy, either as professional advisers on the outside, or in corporations or trade association as officers charged with public relations activities. Then came the Depression and deflation. For a time business made little attempt to grapple with the new conditions. Industries like steel, wood, coal, oil, velvet, and silk did not think there were markets worth fighting for on the old basis of important co-operative effort in public relations. The deflation of stocks, bonds, and general values caused a recession of trade-association public relations activities.

But while the efforts of trade associations in public relations activities languished, the large corporations realigned their public relations policies and efforts. They were faced with entirely new conditions in the market. They needed experts who could keep them constantly informed about the new demands of the public.

Corporations and leaders had lost prestige simultaneously. From a market standpoint, the public was keenly sensitive, because of its feeling of insecurity, to everything about a corporation that it did not understand. Companies were exposed on all sides to attacks from the most unexpected quarters. Not only had many leaders lost their prestige with the public but sales of products fell off for the most



improbable and unlikely reasons: false rumors, for example, that X Company was inimical to Catholics, Jews, or Protestants; or that the product was short-weight. No possible subject that could be a matter of disagreement between groups of the public was too trivial to cause a wave of public disapproval or a falling off in buying.

To meet this situation the public relations counsel was called in at all hours of the day or night to rush to the fire and put out what might well have spread into a disastrous conflagration.

Advising and aiding in the rebuilding of established reputations that had been blasted and attempting to develop new reputations were significant public relations tasks of the period. The day of the straw man and the stuffed shirt was over. The United States no longer wanted idols with feet of clay. It wanted real heroes who kept pace with the changing times and who anticipated changing conditions by changing policies and actions in advance of public pressure or law. The public now wanted business leaders who recognized that *private business is a public trust*.

Trade associations came back, too, not only in the previous fields of action but mainly in connection with their relationship to government. The NRA created many public relations problems for a number of industries. Industry also woke up and recognized that the Huey Longs, the Coughlins, the Townsends, and other demagogues who flooded America with economic and other "isms" might really be undermining the basis of our economic system. Business leaders began to realize that they had neglected many important phases of their own existence. Among them were these:

1. Adherence to the principle that, to survive, private business must always be in the public interest.
2. Recognition of the fact that the public interest is a changing concept and business must change with it.
3. Understanding that the place of business in the American system must be sold to the public.
4. Awareness that public relations techniques can help to do this.

In the first two years of the thirties, corporations began the now common method of direct mailing to their stockholders. The National Association of Manufacturers' advertisements of that period took up defense of business in warning against those who would "strive to pit

class against class.” The year 1935–36 marked the beginning of institutional advertising by the United States Steel Corporation. Many examples of this type of institutional advertising by business appeared during the Depression. But it was a one-way communication with an attempt by business to sell ideas just as it had previously sold products.

The Democratic landslide of 1936 indicated to business that it had failed in selling its “ideas.” In January, 1937, *Business Week* made this clear: “Business is up against an impossible job trying to make the masses think it is 100 per cent good. This helps to explain the spectacular failure of some recent campaigns.” In April, 1937, H. A. Batten, president of the N. W. Ayer and Son, speaking before the Association of National Advertisers, gave a definition of great astuteness and integrity as regards public relations: “Too many manufacturers,” he said “. . . neglect their corporate health and then scream for the public relations herb doctor. . . . Any public relations worthy of the name must start with the business itself. Unless the business is so organized and so administered that it can meet at every point the test of good citizenship and of usefulness to the community, no amount of public relations will avail.”

When the trade associations came back to a public relations point of view in the middle nineteen thirties, they did so with a difference. They now recognized the importance of public relations not only for their own specific problems but also for the broader problems of business as a whole. They realized that it was not enough to pay lip service to the principles of Adam Smith; what was important was to modify policies and actions in regard to labor, wages, and similar topics in the light of a changed America and a changed world. Great trade associations began to deal with these problems from a realistic public relations standpoint. And when reactionary leaders of an industry refused to face the all-important fact that America and the world had changed, liberal leaders did their best to enlighten them.

A turning point in the history of public relations, as well as of business, came in this period when large aggregations of industry developed campaigns that attempted to rationalize and integrate business into the thinking of the American people. Along these lines the United States Chamber of Commerce carried on important public

relations activities through the *Nation's Business*, edited by Merle Thorpe. So, too, the National Association of Manufacturers, under the leadership of Colby Chester, conducted public relations campaigns in many different ways and along many fronts to explain business to the public.

At the same time large corporations expanded their public relations activities. Under the leadership of the late Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., the United States Steel Corporation appointed J. Carlisle MacDonald as its public relations officer. He inaugurated *U. S. Steel News* to interpret the company to its employees. The American Iron and Steel Institute appointed John Wiley Hill to a similar post, while Merle Crowell became public relations officer for the Rockefeller Center interests.

At the same time the already existing public relations officers of various corporations expanded their activities. This was true in the case of Arthur Page of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, of Paul Garrett of General Motors, of Northop Clarey for the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, and of R. Gordon Wasson for J. P. Morgan and Company.

Outside public relations counsel also enlarged their field of activity for their clients. Ivy Lee's firm—now called Ivy Lee and T. J. Ross—stepped up their work for their old client, the Pennsylvania Railroad, and others.

Our own professional activity from 1930 to 1941 offers case studies which reflect the development of this period in public relations. Business and other groups which came to us did so with heightened recognition that public interest and public opinion were of increasing importance in orienting their own attitudes and actions. The emphasis on information, high-spotting, and dramatization became secondary.

One characteristic of the period, as exemplified by our clients, was the growing diversity of the interests which sought professional public relations guidance. Among those who now came to us were great jewelers like Cartier, radio broadcasting companies like NBC and CBS, magazine publishers, real estate developments, chemical firms, radio manufacturers, chain stores, fisheries, refrigerator

manufacturers, cigarette companies, integrated oil companies, construction firms, and many others.

Typical of this general trend was government's recognition of the role of public relations. An example of this was my appointment in 1930 as a member of the President's Emergency Committee for Employment, created by President Hoover shortly after the stock market crash to deal with the emergency. To dramatize the Committee's activities, its chairman, Colonel Arthur Woods, spoke by long-distance telephone to all forty-eight governors, telling them what the federal government was doing to aid employment.

All these factors had a profound effect on the mind of business and on the public. The lay, financial, and trade press gave more and more attention to public relations. Meetings of executives in fields as diversified as railroads, banks, and gelatin took keen interest in opinion molding. And Dean Carl Ackerman of Columbia University expressed the spirit of the decade by proposing a Public Opinion Foundation. At the same time there was widespread discussion of an idea I had proposed in *Propaganda* that the United States government should appoint a secretary of public relations as a member of the President's cabinet.

One of the most significant changes in attitude toward public relations was among the bankers. For years prior to the Depression, bankers had been the symbols of our economic civilization. It did not occur to them, or to the public, that our great financial institutions needed counsel on public relations. Now, in growing numbers, they eagerly welcomed such professional advice. By 1939, for example, our own firm was working with the Bank of America on the West Coast and in Washington.

Business in America was no longer merely private business, It was now individual enterprise devoted to public business. Nor was business a self-perpetuating rite, as some businessmen still seemed to think, with practices and rites that must be maintained merely because they had always been maintained before. It was becoming clear to many persons, however, that business could not survive and grow on an emotional credo. It had to be based on the soundest logical foundation—the interest, convenience, and necessity of the public.

That America was becoming more aware of the nature and importance of public relations was further evidenced by the active interest now shown in the field by newspapers, magazines, universities, social scientists, research organizations, and political parties. In 1935, for example, I was asked to talk on the subject of propaganda at the *Herald Tribune* Institute, directed by Mrs. William Brown Meloney. A talk on public relations delivered by Bruce Barton at a convention of businessmen was widely reprinted and commented upon in all kinds of publications.

Then, in 1936, the Boston Conference on Distribution covered the subject of public relations thoroughly when its director, Daniel Bloomfield, invited authorities in the field to address the fall meeting. That year, too, Dr. George Gallup, head of the American Institute of Public Opinion, Archibald Crossley, and others drew attention to the techniques of measuring public opinion which were used in the 1936 presidential election. The activities of Charles Michelson, publicity director of the Democratic National Committee, focused further interest on the strategies of working with public opinion. At the same time, popular magazine articles about public relations and public relations experts showed not only an advance in the field, but a growing understanding of it.

Henry J. Pringle, in an article entitled "Mass Psychologist," which appeared in February, 1930, in H. L. Mencken's *American Mercury*, still spoke of public relations as if it were no more than "creating a demand by molding the public mind." But Pringle caught the new spirit when he emphasized that "the first task of the public relations counsel . . . is to see whether his client offers something which the public 'can be brought to accept.'" This article was also symptomatic of the times in its emphasis on the social sciences insofar as they affected public relations.

Similar emphasis on the importance of the social sciences for modern public relations was made by John T. Flynn. There were echoes of another age in the title of his article on public relations in the May, 1932, issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. It was called "Edward L. Bernays, the Science of Ballyhoo," at a time when public relations was leaning on science and repudiating ballyhoo. But the new era was emphasized when Mr. Flynn spoke of the modern public

relations expert as “a social psychologist engaged in carrying out in actual practice and according to newer theories that branch of psychology which August Comte and later Herbert Spencer recognized as having a definite relation to sociology.” So, too, in 1934 an article in the *Literary Digest* by Wayne W. Parrish, entitled “He Helped Make Press-Agentry a Science,” used the phrase “opinion management” to describe the public relations of the times.

Public relations was also discussed and analyzed in books. These used the activities of Ivy Lee and our own firm to illustrate the nature, function, and scope of public relations. Thus S. H. Walker and Paul Sklar, in *Business Finds Its Voice: Management's Effort to Sell the Business Idea to the Public*, published in 1938, described in some detail the activities we undertook on behalf of Philco in 1934.

In connection with those activities, we initiated a practice which became widespread toward the end of the decade—the creation of institutes and foundations as public-interest bodies of private profit organizations. *Fact Digest* for November, 1938, credited us with “inventing this type of institute.” It referred to the suggestion we had made to a number of companies to found public-interest bureaus or adjuncts of their regular operations in order to carry on public-interest activities which coincided with their private activities. Thus a velvet manufacturing company would set up a velvet fashion service, a manufacturer of men's clothes would set up a men's style bureau, and so on.

These bureaus, services, institutes, and foundations functioned as nonprofit institutions in the public interest, but were always tied up with a profit organization. This connection was indicated in the name of the public-interest service, which might be called, for example, “The Style Bureau for Men in the XYZ Corporation.” One of the best-known of these public-service units was the United Brewers Foundation, which we helped to organize for the brewing industry in 1937.

By this time the colleges and universities of the United States were keenly aware of the dependence of government, industry, and all other social groups on public opinion. Prominent scholars and organizations devoted to the social sciences therefore gave an

increasing amount of time and attention to analyzing and interpreting public relations.

In 1937, we surveyed public relations training in American colleges and universities and reported the results in a brochure entitled "Universities—Pathfinders in Public Opinion." We found that institutions of higher learning now offered a wide variety of courses on public relations and allied subjects. Cornell University, the University of Minnesota, Bucknell University, Brooklyn College, Ohio State University, and Rutgers University gave courses in public opinion, propaganda and public opinion, public opinion and methods of argument, the formation of public opinion, control of public opinion, the press and public opinion, and so on. College textbooks were also discussing public relations, among them Curtis D. MacDougall's *A College Course in Reporting for Beginners*.

In 1937, Boston merchant Edward A. Filene, with whom we had worked, decided that he wanted to do something to make people think about propaganda. He organized the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, with an advisory board which included the historians Charles A. Beard and James T. Shotwell, economist and now United States Senator Paul Douglas, and sociologist Robert S. Lynd.

The Institute's first activity was the publication of *Propaganda Analysis*, a monthly letter, to help intelligent citizens detect and analyze propaganda, foreign and domestic. It set up classifications for propaganda—the name-calling device, glittering generalities, transfer in terms of approved symbols and sanctions, testimonial, plain folks' device, card-stacking, and band wagon.

In a sense, the Institute's activity was propaganda against propaganda. It helped to create a certain amount of cynicism and deflation for the printed and spoken word, and built up barriers in the public mind against the acceptance of propaganda.

At the same time, university presses and conferences promoted serious study in the field. In 1934, Princeton University Press published Professor Harwood L. Childs' *A Reference Guide to the Study of Public Opinion*. Two years later, the Institute of Public Affairs conducted by the University of Virginia devoted a session to public relations, and Bucknell University did likewise.

In 1940, Professor Childs, in his *An Introduction to Public Opinion*, defined public relations thus:

Public relations may be defined as those aspects of our personal and corporate behavior which have social and public significance. When you define public relations, you also define private relations, as the two are separated by a very thin line. This line is changing constantly. All we can hope to do is draw it as it is today. More and more of our acts are taking on public significance. . . . We need to define personal freedom in terms of social responsibility. . . . A public relations executive is a student of public interest so that he can maximize the social benefits from his services. Consequently, public relations is more than a new *ism* in management. Public relations is based on public interest.

By this definition, he pointed up the factors which we had been stressing in public relations since 1923.

Members of our organization frequently participated in these widespread discussions of public relations, hoping that out of our long and diversified experience we might contribute to a clarification of the private and the public interest aspects of public relations as a twentieth-century profession. In the April, 1930 issue of *Financial Diary*, for example, I wrote:

Since every corporation engaged in business must depend upon the public for its support and its success, it is important that every public contact be consistent with company policy, and that company policy be based on sound understanding of the public. Need for skill and experience in directing and supervising these public contacts has developed a new profession—public relations counsel.

The new profession provides new help for organizations trying to solve the evermore complex and complicated problems of reaching company objectives.

. . .

. . . How can business hear what the public has to say? How can it modify its actions to conform to the public's desires? How can it speak to the public in a language the public understands and appreciates? The modern way is through the services of an expert in public opinion. . . . It is the function of the public relations man to help two partners—business and the public—to understand each other and to supplement each other so that the business may develop to the advantage of both.

In 1935, I tried to analyze the counseling function of public relations in an article which appeared in the May issue of the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. It was a sign of the times that this issue was wholly devoted to the theme of



“Pressure Groups and Propaganda.” My contribution, which dealt “with “molding public opinion,” tried to analyze the meaning of such terms as “the public” and “group leadership,” and such factors as symbols and human motivations. Then I discussed four specific steps that have to be taken in formulating a public relations program: (1) formulation of objectives; (2) analysis of the public’s attitude towards the industry and the services it renders; (3) a study of this analysis with a view to keynoting the approach to the public in terms of action by the industry, this study to be followed by the formulation of policy and a program for educating the public; and (4) the carrying out of this program by dramatizing it through the various media of communication.

The idea of integration with society through a type of public relations which identifies public with private interest was again stressed in a talk I made in 1936 before the Council on Retail Distribution. At this time I emphasized the need for business to redefine its function in re-evaluating itself in the relationship of the other factors in the civilization in which it is operating. The businessman, I pointed out, needs an expert in public relations to appraise his public, to understand it, and to recommend ways of conforming to public desire and need, as well as ways to interpret the policies and acts of his business to the public. This talk emphasized that in every case private and public interest must coincide if business is to maintain its important position in our economic and social life.

Significant of the times was that by 1938, *Fortune*, the magazine of business, took cognizance of public relations for the first time since the founding of the magazine three years earlier. The October issue included an article which pointed out that America’s favorite subject of attack was business. The American people, *Fortune* said, had never really been sold on business, particularly the modern, industrial variety. “Now the supposed cure for this situation,” the article continued, “is what the businessman calls public relations. The term is a broad one and may include all sorts of promotional activity, from commercial advertising to after-dinner speeches; and certain companies have defined and executed it with no little success.”

Thus, after fifteen years, the idea of the new public relations had penetrated without being defined, and even at this late date public relations was still widely considered as a form of verbal magic.

*Fortune* went on to say that the “public relations job of business has fallen considerably short of perfection. It has not even induced the people to trust the businessman. The people suspect that behind his promotion copy the businessman is up to something.” The public distrusted business, according to *Fortune*, because public relations at that moment were not candid; what business needed was a new concept of public relations.

Then, in the March, 1939, issue of *Fortune*, an article about General Motors described the activities of Paul Garrett as the company’s public relations director, that Garrett’s job was to carry out a long-range program of finding out what people like and doing more of it, then finding out what people don’t like and doing less of it. Examining the social horizons of General Motors, *Fortune* suggested that the company’s chairman, Alfred P. Sloan, had more to think about than profits. This was the first time an important magazine had reported a corporation’s public relations.

Indeed, that issue of *Fortune* went further. In an article on “Business and Government,” it warned that American business could avoid committing suicide only by practicing sound public relations. The businessman, said *Fortune*, could not do anything of importance today without generating a problem in public relations. And it added significantly that while the phrase “public relations” had been used to designate all manner of public contacts, it had an inner meaning. That inner meaning was “industrial statesmanship.” Another article entitled “The Public Is Not Damned” made the first direct examination of public relations as such. It examined in detail the public relations activities of such companies as American Telephone and Telegraph, General Electric, United States Steel, General Foods, the National Association of Manufacturers; and of such trade associations as the American Bankers Association and the Association of American Railroads.

*Fortune* here defined public relations as “the label used to describe, at one and the same time, techniques and objectives and the conduct of individual businesses as organizations of people

banded together in an effort to make a living for themselves and a profit for investors.” To this the magazine added: “Public relations is the name business gives to its recognition of itself as a political entity.”

*Fortune* then proceeded to divide the practice of public relations into four parts: (1) poor propaganda, (2) good propaganda, (3) inquiry, and (4) action. Poor propaganda, it said, fails to carry conviction. As examples, the magazine listed some of the material distributed by the National Association of Manufacturers and a few of the trade associations. Good propaganda, it then pointed out, deals with the issues in which the public is interested and illuminates them with new and credible facts. One example of this type of propaganda was that spread by General Electric. The Hays Office was described as “easily the most successful of the long-established group efforts at public relations.” Ford and Chrysler were cited as “men whose very characters are the major factor in the public relations of their companies.” And American Telephone and Telegraph had “the oldest conscious and continuous public relations program in American industry.”

This article concluded that “if to any great extent the present interest in public relations can lead a sufficient number of businessmen to put considerations of public policy in first place in arriving at business decisions, a new era will indeed have arrived. Perhaps it can then at last be shown that the doctrine of enlightened self-interest has in it all the virtues that its sponsors have claimed.”

Thus the period from 1929 to 1941 marked a great turning point in the history of public relations. Through the work of individual public relations counsel, through a developing literature, through university courses, through widespread discussion in the lay, trade, business and scientific press, and through the increasing use of professional public relations guidance by government, business, labor, medicine, and other segments of our society, the new profession was not only growing but also broadening and deepening its point of view.

Soon public relations began to be applied to the problems of American democracy as a whole. At the turn of the decade the Depression had challenged public relations to develop the theory and practice of industrial statesmanship. Now, toward the close of

the nineteen thirties, the rise of Nazi Germany and the threat of war challenged American public relations men to contribute their share to the nation's efforts to combat attacks on our democracy.

It seemed to me that it was the obligation of all who believed in democracy to do everything in their power to strengthen and preserve it, both in the United States and abroad. Along with many others, I also believed that modern propaganda techniques were important factors in psychological warfare and that the United States Army as well as the government must make good use of these techniques to build the morale of its own forces and achieve the highest efficiency in attacking the enemy.

Articles appeared on all sides stressing the use of psychological warfare and the bolstering of morale among our own troops. One that I wrote appeared in the September–October, 1940, issue of the *Infantry Journal*. In it I suggested that counter-propaganda could meet the strategy of terror employed by the enemy in the following ways: by continually emphasizing the weakness of the enemy, using facts, figures, and dramatization of our strong spots; and by deflating the attack of words before the enemy could launch it by calling attention to it, in advance thus exposing the method and taking the wind out of its sails.

As the decade came to a close, Europe was already engaged in World War II. By the summer of 1941, the armed forces became keenly interested in public relations. In June of that year I addressed the Industrial College of Armed Forces on public relations during World War I and the changes in psychological approach and technical developments since 1917. At that time I suggested a public relations program for the United States designed to maintain high morale, proposing a United States government Morale Commission of expert advisers to draw up a master plan for morale and psychological warfare, a program to strengthen faith in democracy, a program to strengthen democracy itself, and a program to sell the armed forces to the people and the people to the armed forces.

Six months later came Pearl Harbor. The United States was embarked upon total war, and coincident with war a new stage in the development of public relations began.

# 11

## ***The Era of Integration, 1941–51***

IN World War II, the emphasis in public relations was, as in World War I, on winning the war. But since 1917 public relations had developed new methods and techniques. The orientation of the public was different, too. Many factors had to be considered in these new activities and approaches to the public.

Technical tools had still further speeded up communication—radio, sound film, air travel. The United States was fighting totalitarian states—Germany, Italy, Japan. These conditions allowed government public relations to make a far greater impact than during the earlier war. The Office of War Information in this country and the thousands of public relations offices in the armed services provided machinery to carry forward the basic ideas.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was a master public relations technician who realized the potency of words in fireside chats and understood the drama of events spread through the new media. He stressed the crusade of democracy and played the outstanding role in rallying the peoples of the free world behind him. The years of the Depression had made the public more aware of the force and power of its own opinions, and the legislation of the New Deal and the Democratic administration preceding the war provided the groundwork for public support of Roosevelt's policies.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill was a master of words, too. Both he and Roosevelt placed too great an emphasis on words, not always supported by an integrated and co-ordinated plan of deeds, but startling pronouncements and dramatic meetings helped maintain the morale of the public and keynoted the public relations strategy. The Atlantic Charter, for instance, dramatized the Four Freedoms. The Casablanca Conference gave the war new values with the demand for the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany and the liberation of oppressed peoples.

Business adapted itself more readily and effectively to the needs of World War II than it had to those of World War I. During the

Depression, belief in the coincidence of public and private business had made great headway. In aiding the war effort, the public carried this new idea forward in deed and word. Even before the close of the war, great private and public groups, trade and professional associations, and industry initiated activities to ensure their more effective adjustment to the postwar world. Many of our clients, of the most diverse sorts, asked us to make evaluating studies as a basis for their behavior and adjustment. Organizations recognized that they needed to act in the public interest, and we were kept busy with many such approaches to the new kind of social engineering.

But some of the important constituent parts of our society did not take this approach. Many maladjustments still were manifest immediately after the war. In one vital field, industrial relations—relations between management and men—maladjustments flared up in devastating labor difficulties and strikes. The findings of such individuals as Elton Mayo were apparently neither studied nor used. The situation was a challenge to public relations. What could industry do to correct postwar maladjustments? And what could public relations do to help industry integrate itself with society at this juncture?

Our own organization's approach to a national problem in a period when the general breakdown of precautionary precepts following victory in Europe threatened progress at home took the form of a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* of December 3, 1946. It is quoted in spite of the fact that it is ours, rather than because it is ours. We attempted to clarify industry's problem and to describe public relations in the latest phase of its development. We indicated the role that the social sciences play in human relationships today, analyzed the functions of the modern public relations counsel, and outlined a guide for organizations interested in engaging public relations counsel, describing the standards that the public relations profession had achieved.

Strikes, our statement pointed out, were only a visible part of the postwar pattern of maladjustments. And they were a small part, like the tops of icebergs that show above water. Strikes were dramatic. They were dominating all discussion of industry's human relationships because the United States had lost 120,000,000 man-

days of production in the first year after V-J Day. "Industry necessarily has many other difficulties in human relationships—with workers, stockholders, retailers, distributors, government, and consumers," our statement continued. "It must maintain good will for its reputation and products with all its publics. Industry could run much more smoothly if it used the powerful tools of the science of human relations to minimize friction and improve its group relationships."

Emphasizing that "industry has brilliantly applied the physical sciences," we suggested that "the social sciences can serve industry's human relationships in the same way that physical sciences serve industry's technological progress."

How can industry harness this knowledge? "By using the objective, independent judgment of the modern technician in social sciences, the public relations counsel, who is qualified by education, professional training, and experience to apply science to practical problems."

The modern public relations counsel, our statement said, (1) analyzes his client and the publics on which his client is dependent, (2) uncovers causes of maladjustments and misunderstandings; and (3) advises courses of action to improve the entire relationship of his client with the public.

The public relations counsel, we pointed out, is often asked to meet specific problems or crisis situations. More often he is retained on a continuing basis to help guide the public relations policies and practices of the business.

Faced with today's incredibly complex public relationships, the executive needs professional advice in this field just as he needs a lawyer or an engineer. But how can the executive decide which public relations organization or man is best qualified for his needs? The problem which points up all that follows in the next several paragraphs is of achieving public relations counsel, principles, and goals which overlook immediate questions of gain and view company or individual progress in relation to long-term values—which in the end may turn out to be in the best interest of society.

It is difficult for the average businessman to differentiate between the publicity man, the press agent, and the counsel on public

relations. It is difficult for him to evaluate the soundness or unsoundness of the public relations counsel's methods, or to judge the effectiveness of his operations, since professional standards in this field are not set by the state, as in the case of other professions. But there are certain steps the executive can take to assure himself of getting adequate public relations service. And so our statement concluded with the following guide for organizations interested in engaging public relations counsel:

"1. To make sure of integrity and probity, ask for and evaluate personal references.

"2. To determine financial and credit standing, ask for bank references and consult Dun and Bradstreet or some other responsible credit organization.

"3. To judge performance, consult officials of major communications media—newspaper and magazine publishers and editors, and radio executives. Consult present and former clients.

"4. To ensure getting seasoned judgment and wisdom, ask for and study the biographies of the principals of the public relations organization being considered. The knowledge required to perform the intricate work demands high educational background and continuity in the profession."

In the period immediately following World War II, spokesmen for business were proclaiming that, if all the new and complex interrelationships were to be met effectively, industry's first job was public relations. The requirements of the time thus led to a tremendous growth of public relations. That growth will be indicated in [Chapter XIII](#), which surveys the field as it exists today.

The phenomenal increase in the number of public relations practitioners; the rise of professional associations of public relations men; the rapid development of literature on public relations, including books, magazines, and bibliographies; the steady increase of university courses devoted to public relations and allied subjects; the continuous active study that the social sciences are making of public relations; the recognition of the field by authoritative publications like the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*; the wide acceptance of public relations by business, industry, government, finance, labor, art, literature, science,



medicine, education, and other segments of American life; and the spread of the public relations profession to various European countries—all this immense progress has taken place in the past decade.

Amidst this rapid and continuous growth of public relations, however, certain problems remain to be solved. One difficulty became apparent immediately after World War II—finding qualified men and women to aid in unraveling and solving the new public relations problems that had been intensified by war displacements. While defense forces had returned thousands of public relations officers, they were not trained to deal with the new and complex problems of industry in this period. And the civilian economy had not trained enough public relations experts for industry's needs.

Calling attention to the importance of public relations for industry, we pointed out prevailing inadequacies in meeting this need. A full-page announcement that was published in the *New York Times* of December 12, 1947, said:

“Business expends great sums of money on public relations today. But public relations is still so relatively new that few businesses have set up systematic methods to gauge the efficiency of their operations in this field.

“Industrial engineers check manufacturing processes. Accountants evaluate fiscal practices. Independent market researchers determine distribution. Opinion-polling organizations measure mass attitudes.

“In their public relations activities, however, businesses do not generally apply the modern method of independent expert appraisal. They have neither the specialized knowledge nor the personnel to appraise their public relations programs and practices expertly and objectively.”

The fact is that even toward the close of the nineteen forties, there was widespread confusion about public relations. Many public relations men misunderstood and misused the term “public relations.” And, in the academic world, scholars and students of public relations and related subjects were confused about the correct interpretation of the term. I had occasion to test this general confusion about public relations in 1948 in a course I gave at New York University.

I opened my lectures by asking my students—all of them juniors or seniors—to tell me what they thought public relations is. Each student was requested to give his definition of the term. Here are twenty-five of these student definitions.

1. Public relations are those activities which create favorable opinions toward products, ideas, or persons to the eventual end of making them more salable.
2. Public relations includes the analysis of a situation between people, institutions, or groups of the public with a view to improving the situation.
3. Public relations is a liaison which promotes good will between the people and an industry.
4. Public relations is the art and science of placing before people the person or the product you represent in the most favorable light.
5. Public relations is an activity aimed at more sales.
6. Public relations creates an awareness of our fellow men.
7. Public relations is the promotion and maintenance of good will of the public for persons who want to sell their products, institutions, or whatever may be.
8. Public relations is an activity dealing with personal and impersonal contacts among individuals in society.
9. Public relations is a combination of all the activities involved in representing an organization to the public in the most favorable light.
10. Public relations is an activity that concerns itself with the promotion of an idea, company, etc., to result in sales.
11. I know public relations concerns meeting people, but I cannot describe it.
12. Somehow public relations conveys the picture of high-pressure salesmen; it is wholly salesmanship.
13. Public relations is the ability of a representative in that field to sell himself and his ideas to the public.
14. Public relations is the survey of human needs and wants, likes and dislikes, and the utilization of that knowledge and information for an intelligent and successful functioning of a group, an organization, or an institution in its relations with the people.
15. Public relations is the promotion of good will.
16. Public relations is a field incorporating knowledge of human beings and their gullibility; it uses this knowledge to further a particular end-product.
17. Public relations is a means by which an individual impresses his personality or his product on others in a socially useful manner.
18. The army definition of public relations is to inform the whole world about the material, the units, and the personnel of the army; I don't know what the civilian

aspects of public relations are.

19. Public relations is an art applied to business; the end result is sales.
20. Public relations is a phase of journalism; it is the art of getting along with people.
21. Public relations is finding out what groups of public will want a product and how to get that product over to them.
22. Public relations means bringing your firm to the public eye favorably.
23. Public relations is selling; it is salesmanship of an idea, a concern's idea or a church's or a baseball club's; it is gaining the good will of the public by selling them your concern.
24. Public relations is establishing the good will of a corporation, a firm, a person, toward all people it does business with.
25. A public relations man is a sort of go-between, a contact man between commercial enterprise or any enterprise and the general public.

Molded by their environment, the students had formulated many common fallacies about public relations. The ideas they presented are shared by adults and, for that matter, by adults in responsible positions of business management. This was revealed in a study on *Public Relations in Business: The Study of Activities in Large Corporations*, made in 1950 by Nugent Wedding, assistant professor of Marketing in the University of Illinois. Professor Wedding's study showed that even those firms which now carry public relations activities need to clarify definition and nomenclature.

This study undertook to find out how eighty-five American business firms in consumer goods, industry goods, railroads, public utilities, and banks practiced public relations. There was only a 35 per cent acceptance of our definition. There were sixteen categories of definition all together, as indicated below, which proves the necessity of a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the problem of semantics and public relations.

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Per Cent of Total</i>
1. Two-fold: proper policy formulation; interpretation to public	35.3
2. Favorable public opinion; building of good will	29.4
3. One aspect of selling job	10.6
4. Solely a publicity activity	10.6
5. Interpreting business to the public and the public to business management	8.2
6. Interpreting aims and activities of company to the public	7.1
7. Combined sales and personnel function	4.7
8. Community and industrial relations	4.7
9. An information function	4.7
10. Relations with employees	4.7
11. Influencing or molding public opinion for legislation (lobbying)	3.5
12. Saying right thing in right way at right time	3.5
13. Confined mainly to community relations	2.4
14. Corporate good manners	2.4
15. Putting Golden Rule into business	2.4
16. Whitewash measures, necessary only when business is under fire	1.2

Over the years, other names have been suggested and often are used as synonymous with public relations—human relations, humanics, opinion management, social engineering, techniques of leadership, and engineering of consent.

It is time that more people, especially group leaders and opinion molders, had a clear conception of the real meaning, scope, and aim of public relations. Public relations does not concern itself primarily with selling something to somebody or advertising something to someone. It is a field of theory and practice dealing with the

relationships of people to the society on which they are dependent for their maintenance and growth.

We live in a pluralistic society. There are many interests—economic, racial, social, and so on. If our competitive society had developed at an even rate, if everything had meshed itself into a pattern of perfection, we might not need public relations, because our interrelationships would be perfect. But in the flux of a democratic society there are maladjustments between individuals and groups, on the one hand, and society as a whole or sections of it on the other.

In this society, public relations has emerged as a form of social statesmanship.

The public relations counsel's function is therefore:

1. To define the social objectives of his client or to help him define it.
2. To find out what maladjustments there are between these objectives and the various elements in our society on which his client is dependent. These maladjustments may be distortions in the mind of the public that are due to misinformation, ignorance, or apathy, or they may be distortions that are due to unsound action on the part of the client.
3. To attempt to adjust the client's policies and actions to society so that the maladjustments may be resolved.
4. To advise the client on ways and means by which his new policies and actions, or old policies and actions, if it is deemed advisable to retain them, may be rendered comprehensible to the public.

In *The Responsibilities of Business Leadership*, issued in 1948 by Harvard University Press, President Conant of Harvard is quoted as saying: "As never before, business needs men who appreciate the responsibilities of business to itself and to that unique society of free men which has been developed on this continent. Such men must understand not only the practical workings of business organizations, but also the economic and social climate in which business operates; they must be as well trained as our professional men in law and medicine."

As Russell Davenport in his book *U.S.A., The Permanent Revolution*, sums up the changed situation, we are slowly moving into the realm of reality in this field: "The corporation's awareness of their responsibilities is indicated by the growth of public relations

activities. Upwards of 4,000 companies are carrying out public relations programs. Many are hardly more than publicity campaigns, however. Good business public relations is good performance, publicly appreciated because adequately communicated.”

But while this societal and integrative approach to public relations has been growing steadily, those concerned with business and its use of public relations recognize that much still remains to be done in this direction. A survey of public relations made by *Fortune* magazine in its May, 1949, issue, for example, was captioned “Business is Still in Trouble: Only good public relations—i.e., good performance that’s understood and appreciated—will ensure its future.”

The most important problem business faces today, *Fortune* said, was the fact that business was not “out of the doghouse yet.” Every United States businessman was, consciously or unconsciously, on the defensive. Certain important advances had been made since the muckraking era. Elmo Roper, summarizing the public’s opinion of business as he had surveyed it since 1934, reported that less than 5 per cent of the public said they were against private ownership, and about two-thirds were inclined to think well of business in business.

“Only the most arrant of optimists, however, would take refuge in these pleasant little circumstances, or even derive much comfort from them,” *Fortune* said. “A majority of the people, Mr. Roper also points out, believe that very few businessmen have the good of the nation in mind when they make their important decisions. They think business is too greedy and that it has played a large part in keeping prices too high. They think, therefore, that government should keep a sharp eye on business. And they have been thinking just about that way for fifteen years. Business, in other words, enjoys the most tentative and precarious kind of approval.”

Ironically, *Fortune* adds, business is spending a great deal more on public relations than ever before. Some four thousand corporations now support public relations departments and programs and about five hundred independent public relations firms are supported mainly by business. In view of all this, why are not the public relationships of business better than they are?

“The main reason business isn’t rolling in good will,” according to *Fortune*, “is that about 95 per cent of what comes off under the name of public relations is sheer press agency. It gets a company or product noticed, but does not necessarily result in durable good relations with the public.”

*Fortune* then gave a definition, a history, and a present analysis of public relations, ending with the warning that “either the day of public relations as performance must come or private business must reconcile itself to a steady contracting. American business still has time to meet the challenge of our time. It can offer the people a generous measure of both security and opportunity.”

It was symptomatic of the mid-twentieth century that *Fortune* should see public relations in these broad societal and integrative terms of industrial statesmanship.

## 12

### ***The Ideal Public Relations Man***

THE IDEAL public relations man does not exist in the flesh. One person cannot, for the simple reason that he is a human being conditioned by experience and environment, possess all the characteristics of the ideal. Nevertheless, if we can describe the ideal public relations man, if we can point out the qualities that make the successful public relations practitioner, we will have set up standards and criteria by which those desiring to enter the field can judge themselves and decide upon their goals.

I think that the ideal public relations man should, first of all, be a man of character and integrity, who has acquired a sense of judgment and logic without having lost the ability to think creatively and imaginatively. He should be truthful and discreet; he should be objective, yet possessed of a deep interest in the solution of problems. From his broad cultural background, he should have developed considerably intellectual curiosity; and he should have effective powers of analysis and synthesis along with the rare quality of intuition. And with all these characteristics, he should be trained in the social sciences and in the mechanics of public relations.

Anyone who aspires to a career in the field of public relations should examine himself objectively to find out whether he has a reasonable number of these characteristics. If you are not objective about yourself, you will find it hard to be objective about others. It is a helpful exercise to recognize your lack of objectivity in discussing subjects in which you are interested. You will find that you identify yourself with the situation and with some preconceived point of view toward it.

Finding out about yourself objectively is an important prerequisite to understanding and dealing with other people's attitudes and motives. This does not mean that you may not find biases and prejudices. Who is not biased? But to function effectively in public relations, you will have to take prejudices into consideration



objectively before you advise your client in his relations with other people.

This is the “personal equation” that scientists take into consideration in their investigations. If I am called upon to deal with something about which I have certain preconceived attitudes, I try to divest myself of personal feelings in considering the problem. I try to judge the situation by the criteria of my ethics, the folkways of the groups concerned, the objectives, and the entire situation as far as I can comprehend it.

As I stated at the outset, one person obviously cannot have all the characteristics of the ideal public relations man. He may be outstanding in one area of ability and absolutely negative in other areas. For example, the ability to get along with people is desirable in any job concerned with human relations, but the lack of it can be compensated for by unusual insight, intuition, and powers of analysis and synthesis.

A primary requisite for public relations is a deep interest in the field, a real drive to work on problems of human adjustment. The best public relations practitioners I know get their greatest satisfaction out of dealing with complicated situations of human accommodation.

As for personality structure and moral qualities, the first requisites are character and integrity. Public relations is a new profession. Neither public opinion nor professional societies govern its conduct. The professional himself must be his own arbiter. If he lacks character and integrity, he will fail to maintain the professional conduct on which he will be judged and on which the profession as a whole is judged.

A profession is a vocation, an art applied to a science in which the primary consideration is not pecuniary reward. There are, of course, as in other professions, many exploiters of the public interest who call themselves public relations counsel. They are not really public relations counsel, to my way of thinking. Although society today uses no legal sanctions to prevent anybody's designating himself a counsel on public relations, integrity and character are demanded by the very nature of the profession.

In his clients' interest, the public relations man needs the strength of character and integrity to say "no" to a client who insists on a policy that may be injurious to him. A public relations man must tell his client not what he wants to hear, but what is sound, what will accomplish his social objectives.

In his own interest, the public relations man must maintain his reputation and that of his profession. The very newness of the field demands an even stricter code of ethics than the older professions. He must reflect his integrity and character equally to the public and to the media of communication that reflect and affect public opinion. Unless he maintains such a code, he is lost from every standpoint. Truthfulness is an indispensable quality both for advancement and for serving the media of communication.

The public relations man must avoid the temptation to do anything that might harm the public. The profession would be more highly respected if practitioners gave up clients who asked them to act in a way inconsistent with the public interest. Because public relations offers rich financial rewards, men without real qualifications often call themselves public relations counsel to exploit the public interest for selfish ends.

When applicants for public relations openings come to our office, I ask them, "What do you like to do?" Generally they tell me they like to meet people. That, to be sure, is valuable. Yet, some of the ablest public relations men I know are not good at meeting people. They are shy. They cannot express themselves in public. But this is compensated for by other valuable characteristics, such as insight, grasp, intuition—something that amounts almost to second sight in projecting the present into the future. These gifts outweigh any ability to meet people. A "handshaker" or front man can meet people. The fellow who is setting a policy, working on problems in the back room, does not necessarily have to possess these qualities.

But there is one trait that every public relations man must have if he is to succeed in his profession. He must have discretion. His relationship to his client is as confidential as that of a lawyer to his client or a doctor to his patient.

Every public relations man should also have an active desire to help people. His professional activity will be to aid organizations,

movements, and people. He will help them to fit better into the society of which they are a part. He must have the desire to do this, and his desire must be quite apart from any monetary considerations between himself and his client. When a public relations man reaches that point in his career at which he is judged proficient, he will find himself working for causes and people who cannot pay, just as socially minded doctors and lawyers do.

What about intellectual attainments? A broad cultural background is imperative. It will enable the public relations man to understand the major trends of the culture in which we live, to know the structure and workings of contemporary society. In addition, the public relations man should have some understanding of the social sciences, of the media of mass communication, and of modern man, thought, and doctrine. The social sciences are important because they study and explain man from different aspects: economics, individual psychology, social psychology, and political economy.

You may wonder whether an advertising man needs this knowledge, too. In my opinion, he should have comparable knowledge. The advertising man attempts to influence his public in an area limited by words and visual images that he projects in the communication media he uses. The public relations man, on the other hand, often deals with society as a whole. He deals with a complex constellation of dynamic forces, with group adjustments or individual adjustments within the group. Often he does not use visual or pictorial symbols. He deals with action, even bringing it about when necessary.

During World War I, for example, an attempt was made to obtain public acceptance of wrist watches for men. At that time a man who wore a wrist watch was considered effeminate. To overcome this prejudice, it was necessary to understand why people behave as they do. What could be done to overcome the prejudice? The war itself suggested a solution. The trench warfare of those days obliged soldiers to go over the top at the zero hour, usually while it was still dark. It was important for each soldier to know the exact time, so that the military operation could be co-ordinated. Matches could not be struck, since the flame would have revealed the location of our troops. However, wrist watches with luminous radium dials enabled

soldiers to go over the top on time without attracting the enemy's attention. Also, as every former GI knows today, a wrist watch leaves the hands free for more important occupations than taking out the old-fashioned pocket watch. Far from being unmanly, a wrist watch is an indispensable instrument in the most manly of occupations, military combat. When these facts became public knowledge, people completely reversed their attitude, and today wrist watches are thoroughly accepted by the male sex.

The point is this: the more you know about people and their reactions to social symbols, the more effective you can be in public relations. Like Columbus, you can sail west and reach new land by accident. But if you have charts, you can do better; you can arrive at a destination decided upon in advance.

There is always a temptation to try to be original in any new field. Because it is a new field, a new man may try to be a pioneer, even if he does not have to be. That builds up one's ego, to be sure. But why not profit from the accumulated literature and experience of public relations? Be original, yes, but not at the price of time and effort wasted by overlooking what other people have already discovered.

Actual experience is a major factor in public relations ability. In other professions, which have a background of hundreds or thousands of years, the men in the field have reduced knowledge to certain principles and the practices that logically follow them. Public relations is still so new that each practitioner may prove to be his own best teacher.

A good public relations man should, nevertheless, have some knowledge of specific techniques: the skills of the artist, the journalist, and the organizational expert. If he does not know much about them, he must know how to engage persons who can adapt them for his purposes. I may not know print and make-up well. But I know what I want to emphasize in a piece of printed matter and how to select the kind of expert I need to get that effect.

One of the first requirements of a good public relations man is that he have a continuing intelligent awareness of life, an intellectual curiosity about all phases of human endeavor. This must be buttressed by a desire to harness curiosity in a practical way. By

itself, curiosity serves no useful purpose. The public relations man must have specific knowledge in the fields in which he is functioning—not necessarily the knowledge of the expert, but enough knowledge to differentiate between experts.

A good public relations man needs a sense of logic, the ability to think accurately. He must have the gift of taking ideas and situations apart mentally and putting them together. He must be highly objective in his outlook on life, so that he may see ideas and situations both as the stereotypes that they are for the different publics and as they actually are. He cannot take anything for granted. If he lacks objectivity, he is likely to be mesmerized by the way things seem to be. This attitude will handicap him in dealing with new ideas for which he wants to create more or less social acceptance.

The ideal public relations man should have the ability to grasp a situation quickly and to project the present into the future, not in the spirit of a fortune-teller but in the spirit of a prophet with a keen sense of reality and a knowledge of the social sciences. His analytical powers should be supported by imagination; he must sense what other people think or how they will react to an idea.

He should also have the ability to see any situation in a context larger than that of the moment and in broader social terms. If you set out to improve the backyards of America, for example, you must ask yourself sociological questions: What does the back yard mean to the family? Will an improved back yard give the whole family more recreation? Will it induce children to play at home instead of on the street? Will it reduce juvenile delinquency? Is it possible to establish recreational opportunities for adults in improved back yards? These questions can be answered best with the aid of sociology and social psychology.

What do we mean by thinking of a situation in wider social terms? Let us take the back-yard example again. If you are interested in a movement for improving back yards, you do not start with the simple premise that a back yard is dirty and ought to be clean. You think of it in broader social terms. A renovated back yard, with fresh-cut grass, with flowers, a terrace screen, a pergola, and recreational opportunities for young and old, should be conceived in terms of

improved family living, improved home sites, and improved play facilities. If you envision the matter further and plan a whole area of renovated back yards, you must begin to think of improved neighborhood and better community relations, of a better-looking and more integrated city, of the social effects of such a nation-wide movement on the American people as a whole.

This quality of imagination must sometimes be accompanied by an ability to dramatize. The public relations man's project may have to be presented in such a way as to arouse public interest and to create high visibility for the idea. An issue may be of the utmost importance to the public, but, like the roots of a tree, it may have little visibility. It is the business of the public relations man to create high visibility for the issues he represents.

How is visibility to be attained? That challenge confronts the public relations counsel every day of his professional life. And you may be sure that you cannot achieve high visibility without imagination.

Once a group of New York civic leaders sought our aid in removing the head of the Board of Education as a step in overcoming the chaotic public school situation. This was a relatively simple goal that could be achieved with the consent of the public. The real problem was to create high visibility for the facts of education in general and the New York public schools in particular.

In an age like ours, when the whole world is in turmoil, public attention is so focused on domestic and foreign politics and war that it is hard to call attention to education. This was a problem that could be solved only by the use of imagination. A committee was organized to educate the public about education. It was called the New York Emergency Committee for Better Schools. The word "emergency" was the product of imagination. It helped to establish in the mind of the public the existence of a crisis. The term "better schools" stressed the positive and hopeful side and gave the public something to work for. The committee sent a telegram to Governor Dewey calling the crisis to his attention and appealing for his support in the fight for better schools. Invoking the symbol of authority gave the newspapers a story and focused public interest still further on the school crisis.

The public relations man must be able to visualize and utilize indirect methods, to see the possibilities of the unexpected oblique approach. But he should beware of the unusual for its own sake. Every method he employs must rest on a thorough grounding in the social sciences and in past experience.

A good public relations man should have a knowledge of the art of persuasion. In persuading the public, he must know how to use facts, his own reason, his persuasive power, and appeals to tradition and emotion.

Facts have always had a tremendous impact on the American conscience. We are accustomed to say: "Show me the facts." "Let's look at the record." The digging out of facts and their presentation is therefore a very important part of the public relations man's equipment. Unless he knows how to find the facts and how to deal with them, he will be greatly handicapped.

The appeal to reason is equally important. Ever since the time of Plato and Aristotle, men have responded to the presentation of the reasons for a thing. The use of reason is basic to man's activity.

In a multiple society like ours, made up of many groups, a short-cut to people is through leaders whom they accept. That is why the use of authority is so important in the public relations man's activity. We have long been familiar with advertising testimonials. The appeal to authority is an important matter for the public relations man to handle.

We also know the role that tradition plays in our culture. A knowledge of the past is an important tool in the hands of the public relations man. Anthropology and sociology show us how much of the life pattern of human beings everywhere is traditional. The two major forces that dominate human life are inertia and momentum. Tradition is based on inertia. Those persons who argued for isolationism in the late nineteen thirties, for example, cited Washington's "Farewell Address" in support of their position. Adherents of the New Deal invoked tradition when they pointed to Jefferson and Jackson.

The public relations man should also be fully aware of available knowledge about emotion. The use of emotional appeals is, of course, familiar. It may appear superficially to be a contradiction to stress both scientific knowledge and emotion. But since public

relations deals with human beings, every phase of human action and reaction must be taken into account. Part of public relations skill is knowing when to use one method and when another, or in what combination.

An important characteristic of any good public relations man is the ability to be convincing. The power of convincing others is important not only in his relations with the public but also in his relations with his clients. All specialists face the problem of convincing. In our democracy, the specialist cannot control the layman; he must convince and persuade him. Every physician, lawyer, architect, and engineer knows what a real art it is to get a client to do something for his own good. This is equally true in public relations. The client may be a specialist in finance or manufacture; his counsel is a specialist in public relations. But everybody fancies himself a specialist in public relations. It requires great tact and great gifts of persuasion to show a client the real facts and interrelationships in a given situation, and convince him of the best policy for him to follow. The public relations man realizes that he is not of much account unless his client follows his advice. A public relations man who cannot sell his client and keep him sold is a poor public relations man. One of the difficult problems in a relationship with a client stems from the fact that the client knows more about the actual conditions and technological side of his business than his public relations counsel, while the counsel presumably knows more about the public than his client. The problem is to adjust these two fields of knowledge to each other.

A public relations counsel must have the ability to express himself. He must be able to convey not only his thoughts to his clients but the thoughts of his clients to others. If he cannot write interestingly, he must be able to spot that ability in others and engage their services. Of course, it is better if he can write well himself, but it is not indispensable. Many people believe that a man has to be a writer to succeed in public relations. What is more nearly true is that he has to be a thinker who can communicate his thoughts to others.

In appraising a potential public relations man, I do not look for writing ability as qualification number one. I look, rather, for a man who can think creatively and imaginatively, who knows what is going



on in the world and in the profession, who has character and integrity and an active desire to help people. He who aspires to a public relations career should love the work. I find that the successful practitioners of public relations, like good runners, get fully as much pleasure from running as from winning the race.

An intangible quality that will stand the public relations man in good stead is judgment. Judgment is the ability to evaluate all the factors in a given situation, not only in terms of the present but in terms of the future. It is also the ability to decide on the relative importance of objectives and issues, to learn from experience, and to make the best possible decision in the light of an objective examination of all the facts.

So far as the educational training of a public relations man is concerned, I am a great believer in what the Civil Service laws call "college training or its equivalent." Indeed, the "*equivalent*" often means more than college training. The fact that a man went to college does not necessarily mean that he has the knowledge or the qualities required in our profession. The "equivalent" of a college training can be obtained through reading, particularly if intelligently planned. You can also get it from your business and social contacts, the people with whom you associate. You can get it by exposure to the finest radio programs, like "Invitation to Learning," to the best books and lectures, to night classes at a college.

Part of the great emphasis that our institutions put on college education is because of its status value rather than for its preparation for work in the world, except in the case of activities that require certain specific skills and knowledge. Today a college education, with its emphasis on status value, is not necessarily indicative of real understanding. Self-education, being more difficult to get, often indicates a greater interest and ability; it shows that the individual wants to overcome his disadvantage.

Public relations courses in university curricula are relatively new. Thirty years ago there were none. Today a number of colleges and universities offer such courses; some even grant degrees in public relations. Boston University was the first school to give an academic degree in this field. The universities started with the social sciences,

and from the social sciences they went on to public relations techniques.

There is no lack of textbooks that present the mechanics of public relations activity. But these books completely ignore something far more important in public relations—the social, economic, and political problems involved in a client's relations with the public, and the integration of public relations work with the social sciences. At the other extreme are those books on public relations that discuss propaganda in the abstract and ignore the practical problems involved in communicating ideas to the public. If more people prepared themselves for a career in public relations by a thorough study of the social sciences, as well as of the principles and techniques of the profession itself, it would be a tremendous gain both for the profession and for the United States as a whole.

Social, political, and economic changes are taking place so rapidly, and communications have been speeded up so much, that a profession was bound to develop which would act in an advisory and interpretative capacity to business, labor, social service, and other groups. As I have said repeatedly, the activities of the public relations counsel resemble those of an attorney, except that he practices in the court of public opinion instead of a court of law. He advises individuals and groups. He acts as counsel to his client, aids the client to plead his case before the court or public opinion, using the ideal of public interest as a base. He interprets the client to the public and the public to the client. His yardsticks are those of the coincidence of private and public interest.

The public relations man helps his client talk to the public. He must know how to supervise and direct the carrying out of plans that will make his client understood. He uses the printed and spoken word and graphic media through which public attention may be reached. The method requires more than a knowledge of media. It needs skill, and experience in effective strategy, timing, planning, organization, and methods of integrating all these activities into one whole.

## ***Extent of Today's Public Relations***

IT IS PERTINENT at this point to survey the field to see just how public relations has grown, penetrated, and influenced many of the most important areas of modern life.

Perhaps the logical approach is to begin with the increase in number of practitioners, though that is not easy. The nomenclature, the titles of men and women who do public relations, are not set by law or custom. As we have seen, people who do public relations work may not even have a descriptive appellation. Then, too, the name applied to the activity itself and the changes it has undergone make it quite difficult to use the term so that it will have the same meaning for everyone. There are broad indications, however, that the number of practitioners in public relations has increased phenomenally—as regards both individuals engaged in or with various firms or organizations and the independent counsel on public relations.

There are no official figures, but a *Public Relations Directory and Yearbook*, the first, published in 1945 (none have been published since), attempts to list people who call themselves public relations men or women. This book lists 455 independent public relations practitioners in sixty-five cities in twenty-four states, and 3,870 public relations directors employed by business firms, 1,216 employed by trade and professional groups, and 588 by social service, religious, and other nonprofit groups. These numbers, it seems to me, only skim the surface. Today there are undoubtedly many, many more. In the 1950 Manhattan classified telephone directory, 394 names were listed under "Public Relations," whereas in 1935 only 10 names were listed. (That does not necessarily mean that all these persons are public relations counsel according to our definition.) Under the heading, "Publicity Service Bureaus," 235 names were listed in 1950, 76 in 1935. In one field alone, that of motion pictures, the 1950 *Yearbook of Motion Pictures*, under the caption "Publicity—Public Relations," lists 87 individuals or firms engaged in public relations.

It is equally difficult to estimate the fees of independent public relations counsel. In the matter of charging, fees vary as they do in other professional fields. They are dependent on the earning power of the organization, and the field it specializes in. Sometimes independent public relations counsel get an over-all fee that includes all their expenses. In other cases, the expenses are charged to the client. *Advertising Age*, an advertising weekly, estimated a few years ago that the top public relations counsel in New York and Chicago shared fees in excess of three million dollars a year.

The growth of associations is a good indication of the evolutionary state of development of any profession. That men and women get together for an interchange of information, points of view, and sociability indicates a common interest greater than their competitive interest. The growth of such organizations shows a move toward professionalization.

In the nineteen thirties, as has been related, an abortive attempt was made by a number of us to form an organization of public relations men. Advance publicity in *Editor and Publisher* created such internal jealousies, however, that the effort fell apart. Quite different was an activity in the thirties to organize a Council on Public Opinion following the pattern of the Council on Foreign Affairs. I was chairman of this group, that met at irregular intervals to discuss topics of mutual interest. Henry Luce, Will Hays, and others talked to us. Academic men who were studying the field of public opinion and practical men co-operated in this first effort to unite these two phases. The existence of this group for several years indicated that there was a broad area of joint action and interest between professionals and academicians.

Since those earliest days, a number of public relations organizations have sprung up in the United States and Europe, on a national and community basis, cutting across varied activities, as well as covering special fields of interest—education, libraries, finance, social service, and motion pictures.

The largest of these organizations, established on a nationwide basis, is the Public Relations Society of America, a 1948 merger of the American Council on Public Relations and the National Association of Public Relations Counsel, which, from 1936 until

1944, had functioned as the National Association of Accredited Publicity Directors. With headquarters in New York, it has chapters in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Honolulu, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, Washington, D. C., and other cities, and publishes the monthly *Public Relations Journal*. Another national organization, the American Public Relations Association, has chapters in a number of cities.

In its charter, the Public Relations Society of America lists a wide range of activities that it promises to enter—everything from interpreting the field to the public to providing facilities and opportunities for research. There appear to be educational and character qualifications necessary for membership. Present-day public relations organizations are likely to become trade organizations unless they establish more powerful sanctions to uphold professional standards for their members and for the group as a whole. Maybe such standards will come only from state licensing. It is regrettable, too, that these groups grew out of “promotions” by promoters rather than from a need felt by the members of the field.

The growth, development, self-recognition, and self-consciousness of public relations is indicated by the increase in groups that represent special interests: the American College Public Relations Association, with some 800 members drawn from the public relations personnel of colleges and universities (prior to 1946 it was named the American College Publicity Association, which originated in 1917 as the American Association of College News Bureaus); the National School Public Relations Association, from the school public relations offices and public school systems; the Financial Public Relations Association, organized from among banks, trust companies, investment houses, and the like, with 1,200 members; the National Publicity Council for Health and Welfare Services, which tries to stimulate and develop better interpretation of social problems and social work, with some 2,000 members, agencies and individuals; local publicity or public relations clubs, such as the Publicity Club of New York and the 50 Club of Los Angeles; the Association of Municipal Public Relations Officers; and the Committee on Publicity Methods of the National Conference of

Social Work. All these groups show a stirring, a desire to exchange information and point of view, and at the same time, to advance the field.

Organization and clarification of aims and objectives have taken place in Europe, too. There, development in this field came only recently. The reasons were Europe's greater conservatism, greater rigidity in patterns of conduct, the existence of cartels which inhibit flexibility in business, and the centralized, dominating control of many capital cities. In totalitarian countries, naturally, there was not and could not be any public relations as we know it because social control is authoritarian. The Institute of Public Relations was founded in England and followed the American pattern, except that it started where we were some thirty years ago. It puts its main emphasis on the "public relations officer," whom it considers to be a one-way conduit of information to the public. Possibly this attitude is due in part to the hierarchic system in England—men at top levels do not want any advice from subalterns concerning policy. They are, nevertheless, willing to use their PRO (public relations officer) to reach a more and more vocal public. The Institute represents such cross-sections of interest as the Association of Optical Practitioners, the Bluers Society, the North Thames Gas Board, the London Press Exchange, and the British Rayon Federation. The younger pioneers in England are trying to remedy their present status, of being, rather remote from the basic policy councils of their clients or employers.

There is a Netherlands Public Relations Society, headed in 1950 by a professor of journalism, former adviser to the Prime Minister; and a French public relations society and a Norwegian public relations society are referred to in the British *Institute of Public Relations Journal*. An international public relations society has also been proposed as a general binder for groups all over the world.

The growing literature on public relations is another valid index of public interest, self-consciousness, and growing status. As the principles and practices that govern a vocation are made known through its literature, they become useful to all and form a firmer basis for the advancement of the field. The first bibliography on the general subject, a *List of References on Publicity with Special References to Press Agents*, was published by the Library of

Congress in 1921. In 1924, Ewart G. and Mary Routzahn, of the Russell Sage Foundation, issued a pamphlet entitled *Publicity Methods Reading List*. Its very title indicates that the concept of public relations had not penetrated in the period, and the sparsity of what it covered showed how little literature there was. In fact, there were only six full-length books that even vaguely covered the subject of public opinion: *The Behavior of Crowds*, by Everett Dean Martin, published in 1920; *The Crowd*, by Gustav LeBon, published in 1908; *Public Opinion* by Walter Lippman, published in 1922; *Public Opinion and the Steel Strike*, by the Commission of Inquiry, Interchurch World Movement, published in 1921; *Public Opinion and Popular Government*, by A. Lawrence Lowell, revised in 1914; and *Public Opinion*, in *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*, published in 1923. Books about public relations or publicity were equally scarce. Only four books were listed under the techniques of publicity: my own book, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, 1923; *The Humanizing of Knowledge*, by James Harvey Robinson, 1923; *Publicity*, by R. H. Wilder and K. L. Buell, 1923; and *Publicity Methods for Engineers*, 1922. Books as far off the subject as *Newspaper Reading Habits of College Students*, by George Burton Hotchkiss and Richard B. Franken 1920, and *The Psychology of Advertising in Theory and Practice*, by Walter Dill Scott, 1921, were also listed in the pamphlet.

It was not until thirteen years later that Harwood L. Childs, who was giving a course in public-opinion management at Princeton University, compiled *A Reference Guide to the Study of Public Opinion*, which was published by the Princeton University Press.

This same scarcity of material is indicated by a research of various bibliographical references. The *Book Review Digest* in 1915 showed no listing of any book on public relations, publicity, or public opinion. Six years later, in 1921, three entries appeared under "Publicity" and six under "Public Opinion," none under "Public Relations." The New York Public Library listed only eighteen items under the joint heading of "Public Relations, Publicity, or Public Opinion" in 1917. But between 1917 and 1925 this list included twenty-eight titles.

The real growth of the field is dramatically demonstrated by two bibliographies, both of them university publications. The first, an

annotated bibliography titled *Propaganda and Promotional Activities*, by Harold D. Lasswell, Ralph D. Casey, and Bruce Lannes Smith, published in 1935 by the University of Minnesota Press, covered about 4,500 items. In 1944 a companion volume, *Propaganda, Communication, and Public Opinion*, was compiled by the same editors and published in 1946 by the Princeton University Press. This volume, covered the nine-year period between 1934, when the first was compiled, and March, 1943, listed almost 3,000 items—a phenomenal rise in that length of time.

Bibliographies compiled by many different organizations now appear at regular intervals. The Public Library of Newark, New Jersey, through Marion C. Manley, business librarian, has a little bibliographical sheet, *Business Literature*, that keeps people informed of new books on public relations. The Cleveland Public Library business department offers the same service. Many professional and trade magazines carry book lists on the subject. Bibliographers like R. W. Bowker and H. W. Wilson Company list the titles of new books and other publications. The Special Libraries Association and the Library of Congress keep their subscribers informed of publications. The *Public Opinion Quarterly* keeps quarterly track of the literature. A recent bibliographical publication, issued by the F. W. Faxon Company of Boston, lists some 200 volumes with 400 references to our work in the field. Showing how the concept of public relations has spread, the works listed cover such varied topics as propaganda, publicity, advertising, politics, government, sociology, public administration, social psychology, business and finance, autobiography, biography, and even fiction and poetry. Examination of these volumes indicates how ideas overcome cultural lags and gain momentum as they spread.

With developing recognition of the necessity for a broader point of view, books will become better integrated in their treatment of the subject. Social scientists recognize the importance of the field today, for we see an outcropping of their books dealing with public relations problems on an integrated basis. Forerunners of this type of book are *Building a Popular Movement, a Case Study of the Public Relations of the Boy Scouts of America*, by Harold P. Levy, and *Mass Persuasion, the Social Psychology of a War Bond Drive* by Robert K.



Merton. These books analyze public relations problems from the standpoint of the social psychologist. They are true case studies and indicate the type of thinking that will undoubtedly be the basis for comparable approaches in a much wider range of problems.

There is a growing mention in learned journals of the importance of public relations in serious literature, such as the comment of Carl I. Hovland in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* in 1948: "Communication as an art has had a very long history. The writer, the orator, the public relations counsel and the advertiser have been practitioners of this art. Communication as a field of scientific inquiry has been of fairly recent origin."

And then there are what might be called the raw-material books for public relations, which provide the material for intelligent approaches. Increasing numbers are being published: for instance, *Experiments on Mass Communication*, sponsored by the Social Science Research Council. The Carnegie Foundation inquiry on the public library considers the public library from the standpoint of its public, the profession, and its place in the social pattern; it analyzes the book industry and the information films from a real depth standpoint.

Books on public relations published in foreign countries are fewer, but as far away as Sydney, Australia, some volumes are appearing. A recent one is *Mightier than the Sword*, a handbook on public relations and its various allied fields. Books on public relations are also appearing in France, England, and other foreign countries.

Periodical treatment of this dynamic field is requisite. In today's quickly changing, highly competitive world, periodicals—weekly, monthly, and quarterly—are needed to cover new developments in professions and vocations. Thirty years ago, when we started, there was no periodical from which the public relations man could extract fact or point of view especially relevant to his work. That is no longer so. Ivy Lee, from 1918 to 1921, published *Notes and Clippings*. His *Public Relations* was published from 1921–25, and his *Information* from 1925–33. These sheets were sent to a selected list of individuals. From 1921 to 1929 we published, from time to time, a four-page sheet called *Contact*, that was devoted to an interpretation of the profession of counsel on public relations. It circulated among

group leaders and opinion molders and at one time the circulation reached 15,000. We owe a great deal to *Contact*. Through it the subject of public relations was spread. It contained quotations and also references to the relationship of various activities to public relations.

Despite these beginnings, it was not until 1937 that public opinion had a journal of its own. Then, under the editorship of DeWitt Clinton Poole and Harwood L. Childs of Princeton University, *The Public Opinion Quarterly* was founded. I talked with Professor Childs about the project and helped outline the field the *Quarterly* would attempt to cover, urging that both theoretical and practical approaches to the problem of public relations be included. I also contributed an article to the first issue which indicated the status of the public relations field after seventeen years.

Since 1938, *Channels*, devoted to the public relations of health and welfare services, has been published by the National Publicity Council for Health and Welfare Services; and the American College Public Relations Association has issued a quarterly since 1949. In England, there was a periodical, *Persuasion*, which covers public relations, propaganda, advertising, and publicity. The *Public Relations News*, a four-page weekly, in format like the *Kiplinger Washington Letter*, is published in New York. Of course, the professional journals of the social sciences treat certain aspects of public relations. Certainly the *Journal of Social Issues*, published by the American Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues; *Human Relations*, published by the Tavistock Institute of London; and *ETC; Review of General Semantics*, published by the International Society for General Semantics should not go without mention. And there are the journals in publishing, advertising, and selling, which, antagonistic in the twenties, today are out-and-out friendly and devote increasing time and attention to the subject.

The academic field, with rare exceptions, was not immediate in its grasp or perception of public relations. New York University, as I have stated, invited me to give the first course on the subject in 1923. Today interest has spread throughout the United States, and courses are being offered at many universities and colleges, and profit and nonprofit groups have set up special conferences to deal

with the subject. Fourteen years ago, according to a study we made then and published in a brochure entitled *Universities—Pathfinders in Public Opinion*, there were only three courses that had “public relations” in their titles: one at Bucknell University, one at the College of the City of New York, and one at the University of Southern California. A recent study made by Alfred McClung Lee shows that in 1945, twenty-one universities offered courses in public relations. In 1947, thirty universities offered a total of forty-seven courses. Sixty-two universities offered public relations courses in 1948; twenty offered courses in publicity. Only five had five or more courses in public relations or publicity. In 1950 the American Association of School Administrators devoted its entire 497-page yearbook to the treatment of public relations in the American school system, and many universities give complete courses in the subject.

Background courses for public relations are listed in the 1950–51 catalogue of the New School for Social Research. Six courses are announced on the theory and principles of public relations, ten courses on the techniques of public relations, eight on the media and techniques of communication, and six under research and its problems. The City College of New York School of Business and Civic Administration announces comprehensive courses, and Boston University offers a degree in public relations in its school of public relations. Incidentally the first Ph. D. degree in public relations was conferred by Columbia University in 1950, the recipient’s thesis covering the field of insurance. Syracuse University conducts public relations courses for bankers in co-operation with the American Institute of Banking.

As recently as 1939, public relations courses in which I participated first reached the West in summer courses arranged for laymen at Leland Stanford University, Reed College, and the University of Washington.

The interest in public relations which I found in Hawaii on my 1950 visit was an eye-opener; it was as keen among graduates, undergraduates, and laymen as among leaders in social service, government, business, and nonprofit organizations for whom I conducted a seminar during the summer.

It is still a question just where public relations fits into the university and college curriculum. Sometimes it is put in journalism, other times in business or in economics, politics, or government. This interest of education in the field is echoed in publications of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. The earliest academic group I have been able to find interested in the subject was the Social Science Research Council, which in October, 1931, gave recognition to increasing interests by appointing an advisory committee on pressure groups and propaganda. This committee was composed of Harold D. Lasswell, University of Chicago, chairman; Ralph D. Casey, University of Minnesota; H. E. Gosner, University of Chicago; Pendleton Herring and John D. Hicks, both of Harvard University; Peter H. Odegard, Ohio State University; and Kimball Young, University of Wisconsin. The committee conducted hearings in which experts in the field participated, and also sponsored publications in the field, notably the two bibliographies previously mentioned.

Universities have been open-minded in this period, but less so the encyclopedias and other reference books. They seem to have retained the idea of public relations as just a euphemism for press agency. An idea has to be shaken down pretty well before it is accepted by these reference guides and encyclopedias. They like to play safe and avoid sanctioning any idea not already fully established in the public mind. The 1951 printing of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* among its thousands of items contains no article on public relations. "10 Eventful Years," published by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1947, included an article I wrote on public relations, the first treatment of the subject by the *Britannica*. The *Encyclopedia Americana*, on the other hand, in its 1947 printing, published a five-page article that recognized the field by defining it, discussing it, and appending a bibliography. This article was written by Reginald Clough, the editor of *Tide*, and was the first article on public relations to appear in this encyclopedia. The authoritative *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, while it mentions public relations counsel, does not include an entry that deals specifically with public relations. The nearest approach is Harold Lasswell's mention in his article, "Propaganda," in 1933. Although publicity,

collective behavior, social process, public opinion, democracy, politics, lobby, interest, symbolism, education, press, radio, advertising, and social reform are all treated in special articles, there is no cross-reference to public relations.

The *Columbia Encyclopedia* still contains no article on public relations, although it has carried an article on propaganda since 1935.

*Who's Who in America*, in the 1950–51 volume, keynotes the present status of the public relations counsel in the hierarchy of American group leaders and opinion molders, giving a quantitative and qualitative evaluation. This respected guidebook to American leadership analyzes for the first time in its history the vocations of those listed in the book by percentage and number to the total, including public relations. Eighty-one Americans judged by *Who's Who* as distinguished Americans, are named under public relations—81 out of a total of 40,500 individuals—0.2 per cent of the total. This compares with 0.5 per cent for actors and actresses, 0.5 per cent for diplomat, 0.1 per cent for politicians, and 0.3 per cent for publishers. Less in percentage than public relations experts are art patrons, club women, explorers, hospital officials, interior decorators, pharmacists, and statisticians. There are, however, more editors (2.6 per cent), authors (3.2 per cent), and lawyers (7.1 per cent). Public relations, according to this authoritative source, occupies an important place among the vocations in the United States.

Another indication of the trend of public relations toward an honorable place among the vocations of distinguished persons is the inclusion of this field of activity in *Who Knows—and What*, published in 1949. This “Who’s Who” among the experts gives biographies of twenty-three persons whom it classifies under the heading of public relations.

Just as the literature on public relations has undergone a metamorphosis, so has its treatment by the great media of communications—the daily and periodical press, the radio, the motion picture field, and even fiction.

In the early twenties, as we have seen, public relations was considered a euphemism for press agentry, and press agentry was anathema to the newspapers—the battle against the press agent led

by the American Newspaper Publishers Association. Not only was public relations seldom mentioned, but when it was, it was mentioned sneeringly. Antipathy against “space grabbers,” possibly even jealousy of the high incomes the public relations expert usually earned, consigned him to passionate anonymity. There was an unwritten code that the names of public relations men, as well as their title, be dropped from even the legitimate news story.

Today, the *New York Times*, a traditional pacemaker among American newspapers, boldly identifies the individual whose picture it runs as a man engaged in public relations and mentions public relations surveys, campaigns, and activities. Photographs are often run of public relations men appointed or elected to office in private or nonprofit organizations. News stories about public relations people and campaigns are treated on a parity with those of other vocations. Whatever reticence there is today—and there still is a slight self-consciousness about the newspapers’ use of public relations news and public relations men—will undoubtedly break down in the near future.

The magazines were the first medium to tell the public about the public relations man. In February, 1930, the *American Mercury* ran a profile of Ivy Lee and later one of me—“Mass Psychologist.” The *Atlantic Monthly* in May, 1932, contained a profile of me written by John T. Flynn and called “Edward L. Bernays, the Science of Ballyhoo.”

The periodical press today accepts the public relations man as fully as other fields. The *New Yorker* and other magazines print profiles. The general magazines carry stories of his campaigns. *Time* and *Newsweek* discuss public relations activities in connection with stories they cover. The press campaigns against public relations carried on by *Printers’ Ink*, *Editor and Publisher*, and other comparable journals have often been replaced by special issues devoted to the public relations of their particular fields.

The personalities of public relations men are becoming better known through various types of profiling. In the three-year period, January, 1946, to July, 1949, the *Biography Index* reports twenty-three biographies of public relations people appearing in the

publications of that period and twenty-five references to biographies of press agents.

As for the magazines covering business, *Business Week* was really a forerunner in this field. It ran two full reports on public relations that stimulated great interest among businessmen—one in the issue of January 23, 1937, and another on October 1, 1939. *Fortune* pioneered when it ran its first broad article in March, 1939, "The Public Is Not Damned," and then another in May, 1949, "Business Is Still in Trouble." The latter article was heavily advertised and helped focus public attention on the subject. In 1950 this interest was further intensified through an additional series of articles on the communications field.

The radio has hardly treated the subject at all. The Town Hall Meeting of the Air has included a number of topics covering public opinion and propaganda, but none on public relations, as far as I know. The University of Chicago Round Table, similarly, has touched on propaganda, but not on public relations.

The movies, to my knowledge, have paid little attention to the subject. The March of Time in November, 1947, released a documentary—*Public Relations*—on the subject. But even here the editors were wary in moving too far ahead of the movie-goers' concept of public relations, and the main thesis of the story was old-time press agency, although it did include shots of professional public relations counsel.

In fiction the public relations man has made more of a dent than in the movies. Public relations men have appeared in novels as principal characters, been referred to in detective stories, and been mentioned even in such books as Sinclair Lewis' *It Can't Happen Here*. Rion Bercovici wrote a novel, *For Release*, in which the principal character is a public relations man. Charles Yale Harrison told in *Nobody's Fool* a lurid tale of the doings of one public relations man. Rex Stout refers to public relations in his detective story, *The Silent Speaker*. But even today the subject is treated in a completely distorted fashion, as in Jeremy Kirk's *The Build-Up Boys*.

It is not unusual for public relations experts to be honored by governments, universities, foundations, and other institutions in many varied ways. Several fellowships have also been awarded in

the field, among them the Edward L. Bernays Foundation Fellowship in Applied Social Science at Cornell University for the year 1951–52.

The great mass media—newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and motion pictures—both as individual organizations and through trade associations, have acknowledged the impact of public relations and now often have public relations men on their staff or retain them as counsel. We ourselves have been retained over the years by such organizations as the Columbia Broadcasting System, National Broadcasting Company, *McCall's* Magazine, *Time*, Inc., Curtis Publishing Company, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, and Fox Film Corporation. We mention them only to indicate that even the corporate structure engaged in mass communications is now keenly aware of the value of getting professional advice in enabling it to deal more effectively with the public on a two-way basis.

This same recognition has, of course, led to the retention of public relations counsel or the appointment of public relations directors by the great trade associations of the country, both in their general problems and in specific competitive situations.

Recognition has also come from labor organizations, which today make use of public relations extensively. CIO President Philip Murray has said: "The CIO welcomes the constant scrutiny of its aims and the means it uses. The development of increasingly responsible leadership in both labor and management will increase public confidence. We in the CIO do not tolerate racketeers. We publish our financial statements; we are constantly developing more and better trained leaders; we support hundreds of training schools and institutes for our members; we employ technicians from outside our ranks who have given us valuable assistance since the formation of the CIO. . . . We believe we have a program which is of interest to all the component parts of our society. We are doing all we can to present that program to the nation. We use the labor press, pamphlets, radio, mailing lists, personal contacts—every device known to the expert in public relations."

The CIO and the AFL both carry on public relations activities. The CIO publishes many pamphlets and a weekly newspaper, gives out news releases, participates in network radio programs, and once a year uses the springboard of a national convention to present its



point of view to America. The American Federation of Labor carries on comparable activities. A union-industry show put on at large halls in Cincinnati, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Philadelphia dramatizes products made by the AFL.

Outstanding among labor bodies engaged in public relations activities are the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union, working on a national and local level, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. The Textile Workers Union and the United Automobile Workers of America carry on regular activities. The United Mine Workers of America employ a New York public relations firm to handle their national news bureau.

Labor's political education is carried on in the AFL. The National Labor Service is supported by CIO, and AFL wages war against intolerance. Money-wise, in 1947 the American Federation of Labor spent more than \$750,000 to try to defeat the Taft-Hartley Act.

Religious bodies, social service organizations, racial and other groups recognize the importance of engaging public relations counsel, as do professional organizations of doctors, lawyers, engineers, and others.

It is unnecessary, really, to stress the recognition that has come to public relations from finance, commerce, and industry, which is possibly greater than from any other sources. Corporations today recruit top officials from the public relations field. Many executives of large corporations were formerly in public relations. Corporations pay public relations officers salaries in line with those of other executives, and fees to counsel on public relations in line with attorneys' fees.

Advertising agencies have public relations vice-presidents. Public relations research organizations offer special researches in public relations. As an example of these, Elmo Roper, in his *Interviewer's Handbook 1949*, describes one of his services as follows:

"Public relations" is a relatively new term. Corporations have become increasingly concerned about their standing in the eyes of the public just as politicians have always been. The "public relations counsel," who is the expert in advising companies how to act so as to deserve the public's confidence, needs some facts to go on. He needs to know *how* his client does stand with people and *why* that standing is good or bad. He needs to know what people want and expect from business enterprises beyond good products and values. Public

relations research tries to get the answers to these questions. The Elmo Roper firm does a constantly increasing amount of this type of research for its clients.

It is impossible to tell how many men and women are engaged in public relations in government at national, state, and city levels because often the function is described by some other name. But we can get some estimate of the personnel engaged in the activity on the national level and the sum of money spent on it, as well as look at the record to find the description of services.

The Bureau of the Budget report of activities considered as public relations and publicity included the following: preparation of material for newspapers, periodicals, and other non-federal publications; distributing press releases and interviewing representatives of the press; preparation of material for broadcasting and contacts with broadcasting representatives; preparation of advertisements (paid or free), except advertising relating to the acquisition or disposal of government property; preparation, installation, and circulation of exhibits; production of motion pictures and film strips, except those for internal use in the government; and preparation of publications neither required by law nor issued primarily for internal use in the government.

Excluded from consideration was the time of employees whose work is devoted to publications required by law (e.g., annual reports, farmers' bulletins, internal revenue decisions, and other publications of this type) or those primarily for use within the government; the answering of correspondence from the public; and the issuance of interpretations on regulations.

In 1948 the estimated full-time employees engaged in this field in government were 2,232, the part-time, 1,212, with a combined annual salary of \$13,043,452. This had increased by 1949 to full-time, 2,423, part-time, 1,243, with an annual salary of \$13,539,008. World War II undoubtedly greatly accelerated the growth of public relations departments in government service. In the Office of War Information alone, a giant public relations service of the government, there was a staff of 5,693.

A study of the *U. S. Government Organization Manual, 1950–51* leaves no doubt that public relations activities have a key place at highest policy levels in research on public attitudes, development of

public policy and practice, and planned approaches. The widespread functions may be indicated by examining just a few. In the Department of State, the assistant secretary for public affairs advises the Secretary and other high officials of the department on public opinion affairs as they relate to the development of foreign policy. He supervises the dissemination of information designed to keep the American public informed on international affairs. The Office of Public Affairs develops and conducts programs to keep the American public informed on international affairs, and keeps the department informed on American public opinion. This office includes the Division of Public Liaison, which maintains relations with private groups, organizations, and individuals interested in international affairs, provides information and consultative services, and arranges for the presentation of their views to the department.

In the Department of Defense, the Office of Public Information is responsible for the development and establishment of public relations policies and practices for that department. It is responsible for the dissemination of military information to the public, liaison with other government agencies on matters of mutual interest in the field of public relations, and the co-ordination and supervision of procedures within the field commands of several services.

The Department of the Navy has its Office of Public Relations; the Department of Justice has a director of public relations.

The Department of the Interior lists, under its Office of the Secretary, a Division of Information. The Director of Information is responsible for a unified, effective departmental information program and policy. The Division of Information has technical supervision over all information activities of the department's bureaus and offices. It arranges for the co-ordination, supervision, and dissemination of useful information on the economic research, service, construction, conservation, utilization, and other programs of the department as they relate to the public interest and the nation's natural resources. The division provides information service for newspapers, press associations, magazines, radio networks and stations, motion-picture companies, and other media or individuals concerned with the department's activities.

The Department of Agriculture had its Office of Information provided for as early as 1913.

The General Services Administration maintains an Office of Public Information and Reports responsible for the initiation, development, and direction of the public relations and information programs of the General Services Administration. It is the central point for the coordination and dissemination of public information and reports, prepares and distributes news stories and other informational releases for the press and wire services, and provides technical supervision over and assists all field offices with public information programs and problems of local or regional interest.

Outside the field of government, the National American Red Cross has a vice-president for public relations; the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, a director of public relations; and the International Monetary Fund, a director, Office of Public Relations.

Internationally, of course, the Voice of America is our government's recognition of the vital role of public relations in our foreign affairs. The large amount of money spent on the effort indicates the importance attached to it.

Within the United Nations, there is an assistant secretary general in charge of Public Information, with a director and office in addition. Many of the recently formed governments plunged into public relations as a first step. In 1949, immediately after Indonesia had declared its independence, a young man appeared in our office presenting a card: "Soekarno, Department of Public Relations, Indonesian Republic."

**PART TWO**  
**PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ACTION**

## ***Introduction***

IN **PART ONE** of this volume, I have attempted to outline the origins and development of public relations, to define the nature and scope of present-day activity, and to survey the principles and practice of public relations. Part Two will deal with public relations in actual practice. It opens with a discussion of the factors entering into the molding of public opinion, followed by a number of case histories taken from my experience as exemplifications of the principles discussed.

The case histories cover such organizations and professions as nursing, house magazines, sales management, theater, direct mail services, mutual savings banks, advertising, and other activities. Each chapter is based on the public relations problems of a specific company or group in accordance with our analysis of the situation. In every instance I have attempted to show *principle in action*.

## 14

### ***The Engineering of Consent***

DEMOCRACY *has been defined as government by the consent of the governed. But today our society is so complex that it is not government alone that needs the public's consent. Every group and, for that matter, every individual needs the understanding and support of public opinion, in order to become integrated into our democratic society. To achieve this integration, the individuals or groups who wish to present their case to the public must employ one or more of the media of communication. These media—the press, motion pictures, radio, television, and so on—are now immense in their impact, reaching millions of people, sometimes the entire nation.*

*It took time for people to recognize that there are basic principles and techniques by which they can improve their public relations. And it took time for them to recognize that modern means of communication are more than a highly organized mechanical web. They are also a potent force for social good or evil. Thus an important factor in present-day public relations is the standard or social responsibility which its best practitioners maintain.*

*The relationship between modern communications and social responsibility was the theme of a special issue of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. That issue, devoted to "Communication and Social Action," contained my article on "The Engineering of Consent," a phrase that subsequently became a synonym for certain aspects of public relations.<sup>1</sup>*

*The following chapter, based on that article, discusses basic principles and techniques of the engineering of consent.*

Freedom of speech and its democratic corollary, a free press, have tacitly expanded our Bill of Rights to include the right of persuasion. This development was an inevitable result of the expansion of the media of expression. All these media provide open doors to the public mind, and through them any one of us may influence the attitudes and actions of our fellow citizens.

Knowledge of how to use this enormous amplifying system becomes a matter of primary concern to all persons who are interested in socially constructive action.

There are two principal divisions of this communications system which maintain social cohesion. On the first level are the commercial media. Approximately 1,800 daily newspapers in the United States have a combined circulation of nearly 53,000,000. There are approximately 8,500 weekly newspapers and more than 7,600 magazines. Approximately 3,000 radio stations of various types broadcast to the nation's 96,000,000 receiving sets. There are 102 television stations in the United States, 12,769,300 television sets, and a potential television audience of 40,000,000 people. Approximately 15,000 motion-picture houses have a capacity of almost 12,000,000. A deluge of books and pamphlets is published annually. The country is blanketed with billboards, handbills, throwaways, and direct mail advertising. Round tables, panels and forums, classrooms and legislative assemblies, and public platforms—any and all media, day after day, spread the word, someone's word.

On the second level there are the specialized media owned and operated by the many organized groups in the country. Almost all such groups (and many of their subdivisions) have their own communications systems. They disseminate ideas not only by means of the written word in labor papers, house organs, special bulletins, and the like, but also through lecturers, meetings, discussions, and rank-and-file conversations.

The web of communications, sometimes duplicating, crisscrossing, and overlapping, is a condition of fact, not theory. We must recognize the significance of modern communications not only as a highly organized mechanical web but as a potent force for social good or possible evil. We can determine whether this network shall be employed to its greatest extent for sound social ends, for only by mastering the techniques of communication can leadership be exercised fruitfully in the vast complex that is democracy in the United States.

In an earlier age, in a society that was small geographically and was more homogeneous, a leader was usually known to his



followers personally; there was a visual relationship between them. Communication was accomplished principally by personal announcement to an audience or through a relatively primitive printing press. Books, pamphlets, and newspapers reached a very small literate segment of the public.

We constantly hear that the world has grown smaller, but this so-called truism is not actually true by any means. The world has grown both smaller and very much larger. Its physical frontiers have been expanded. Today's leaders have become more remote physically from the public; yet, at the same time, the public has become much more familiar with them through the system of modern communications. Leaders are just as potent today as ever.

In turn, this system, which has constantly expanded as a result of technological improvement, has helped leaders overcome the problems of geographical distance and social stratification in reaching their publics. Underlying much of this expansion, and largely the reason for its existence in its present form, is the widespread and enormously rapid increase in literacy among the people of the world, especially the United States.

Leaders are the spokesmen for many different points of view. They may direct the activities of major organized groups such as industry, labor, or units of government. They may compete with one another in battles for public good will; or they may, representing divisions within the larger units, compete among themselves. These leaders, with the aid of technicians who have specialized in utilizing the channels of communication, have been able to accomplish purposefully and scientifically the "engineering of consent."

This phrase means, quite simply, the use of an engineering approach—that is, action based only on thorough knowledge of the situation and on the application of scientific principles and tried practices in the task of getting people to support ideas and programs. Any person or organization depends ultimately on public approval and is therefore faced with the problem of engineering the public's *consent* to a program or goal. We expect our elected government officials to try to engineer our consent through the network of communications open to them for the measures they propose. We reject government authoritarianism or regimentation,

but we are willing to be persuaded by the written or spoken word. The engineering of consent is the very essence of the democratic process, the freedom to persuade and suggest. The freedoms of speech, press, petition, and assembly, the freedoms that make the engineering of consent possible, are among the most cherished guarantees of the Constitution of the United States. Theoretically and practically the consent should be based on the complete understanding of those whom the engineering attempts to win over. But it is sometimes impossible to reach joint decisions based on an understanding of facts by all the people. With pressing crises and decisions to be faced, often a leader cannot wait for the people to arrive at even general understanding. In certain cases, democratic leaders must play their part in leading the public through the engineering of consent to socially constructive goals and values. This role naturally imposes upon them the obligation to use educational processes, as well as other available techniques, to bring about as complete an understanding as possible.

Under no circumstances should the engineering of consent supersede or displace the functions of the educational system, either formal or informal, in promoting understanding in the people as a basis for their action. But the engineering of consent often does supplement the educational process. If higher general educational standards were to prevail in this country and the general level of public knowledge and understanding were raised as a result, this approach would still retain its value.

Even in a society of a perfectionist educational standard, equal progress would not be achieved in every field. There would always be time lags, blind spots, and points of weakness; and the engineering of consent would still be essential. The engineering of consent will always be needed as an adjunct to, or a partner of, the educational process.

Today it is impossible to overestimate the importance of engineering consent; it affects almost every aspect of our daily lives. When used for social purposes, it is among our most valuable contributions to the efficient functioning of modern society. But the techniques can be subverted; demagogues can utilize them for antidemocratic purposes as successfully as those who employ them

for socially desirable ends. The responsible leader, to accomplish social objectives, must therefore be constantly aware of the possibilities of subversion. He must apply his energies to mastering the operational know-how of consent engineering and to out-maneuvering his opponents in the public interest.

In Part I of this book I have shown how the profession of public relations has arisen to assist today's leaders in consent engineering. Just as the civil engineer must analyze every element of the situation before he builds a bridge, so in order to achieve a worthwhile social objective, the engineer of consent must operate from a foundation of soundly planned action. In an earlier chapter this aspect of public relations was considered briefly, but it requires further expansion here. If we assume that he is engaged in a specific task, he must draw up his plans. These plans must be based on four prerequisites: (1) calculation of resources, both human and physical—manpower, money, and time available for the purpose; (2) thorough knowledge of the subject; (3) determination of objectives, subject to possible change after research—specifically, what is to be accomplished, with whom and through whom; and (4) research of the public to learn why and how it acts, both individually and as a group.

Only after this preliminary groundwork has been firmly laid is it possible to know whether the objectives are realistically attainable. Only then can the engineer of consent utilize his resources of man power, money, and time, and the media available. Strategy, organization, and activities will be geared to the realities of the situation.

The task must first be related to the budget available for man power and mechanics. In terms of human assets, the consent engineer has certain talents—creative, administrative, and executive—and he must know what these are. He should also have a clear knowledge of his limitations. The human assets need to be implemented by work space and office equipment. All material needs must be provided for.

Above all else, once the budget has been established and before another step is taken, the field of knowledge related to the subject should be thoroughly explored. This is primarily a matter of collecting and codifying a store of information that will be available for practical,

efficient use. The preliminary work may be tedious and exacting, but it cannot be by-passed, for the engineer of consent should be powerfully equipped with facts, with truths, with evidence, before he begins to show himself before a public.

The consent engineer should provide himself with such standard reference books as *N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*, the *Editor and Publisher International Year Book*, the *Radio Annual*, the *Congressional Directory*, *The World Almanac*—and, of course, the telephone book. (*The World Almanac*, for example, contains lists of many of the thousands of associations in the United States, a cross section of the country.) These and other volumes provide the basic library necessary to effective planning.

At this point in the preparatory work, the engineer of consent should consider the objectives of his activity. He should have clearly in mind at all times precisely where he is going and what he wishes to accomplish. He may intensify already existing favorable attitudes; he may induce those holding favorable attitudes to take constructive action; he may convert disbelievers; he may disrupt certain antagonistic points of view.

Goals should be defined exactly. In a Red Cross drive, for example, a time limit and the amount of money to be raised are set from the start. Much better results are obtained in a relief drive when the appeal is made for aid to the people of a specific country or locality rather than of a general area such as Europe or Asia.

The objective must at all times be related to the public whose consent is to be obtained. That public is people, but what do they know? What are their present attitudes toward the situation with which the consent engineer is concerned? What are the impulses which govern these attitudes? What ideas are the people ready to absorb? What are they ready to do, given an effective stimulant? Do they get their ideas from bartenders, letter carriers, waitresses, Little Orphan Annie, or the editorial page of the *New York Times*? What group leaders or opinion molders effectively influence the thought process of what followers? What is the flow of ideas—from whom to whom? To what extent do authority, factual evidence, persuasion, reason, tradition, and emotion play a part in the acceptance of these ideas? The public's attitudes, assumptions, ideas, or prejudices

result from definite influences. One must try to find out what they are in any situation in which one is working.

Who is the public? The phrase “public opinion” seemingly implies the existence of a united, cohesive public. Such a public can exist, perhaps, in times of a vital need or emergency, but ordinarily what we call the public is made up of many publics or groups banded together because of some common interest.

A political tactician, in planning his campaign, first roughly classifies his public into those who are for him and do not need to be propagandized, those who are dead against him, and those who do not belong to either of those two groups but may be swayed. Such an analysis of the public is simple and elementary, but only rarely can the public be so definitely classified. The public may, for some purposes, be classified according to geographical distribution. Or it may be divided according to age groups. For example, sponsors of Hopalong Cassidy a predominantly juvenile public, whereas the Townsend Plan appealed to an elderly following. The public may also be divided according to sex, financial status, occupation, economic or political belief, or social grouping in the narrower sense. It may be classified according to reading habits, intellectual capacities, position as leaders or followers, employers or employed, religious affiliations, national derivations, or individual special interests in sports, philanthropies, hobbies, and so on.

Again we have such voluntary groupings as professional organizations of doctors, lawyers, nurses, and the like; trade associations; farm associations and labor unions; women’s clubs; religious groups; and the thousands of clubs and fraternal associations. Formal groups, such as political units, may range from organized minorities to the large, amorphous political bodies that are our two major parties. Today, there is still another category of the public group that must be kept in mind by the engineer of consent. The readers of the *New Republic* or the listeners to a popular radio or television commentator are as much voluntary groups, although unorganized, as are the members of a trade union or the Rotary Club.

How can the persuader reach these groups that make up the large public? He can do so through their leaders, for the individual looks

for guidance to the leaders of the groups to which he belongs. He may be dominated by the leaders of many groups, for the group cleavages of society are many and diversified. They play a vital part in the molding of public opinion, and they offer the propagandist a means of reaching vast numbers of individuals, for with so many confusing and conflicting ideas competing for the individual's attention, he is forced to look to others for authority. No man, in today's complicated world, can base his judgments and acts entirely on his own examination and weighing of the evidence. A credence in leaders is a sound shortcut when the leaders are sound.

The group leader thus becomes a key figure in the molding of public opinion, and his acceptance of a given idea carries with it the acceptance of many of his followers—through many channels. The function of key leaders as mediums for reaching large groups of the population is of primary importance and must never be overlooked. Moreover, they not only convey ideas to the public, but also interpret and make articulate to the propagandist, for his guidance, the groups they represent. Taken all together, they represent the whole public.

It is through group cohesion and group leadership that one can awaken public interest most speedily and constructively. The repeal of prohibition was achieved not by directly converting millions of people, but by enlisting the active support of leaders of groups to which millions of people belonged.

To achieve accurate working knowledge of the receptivity of the public mind to an idea, it is necessary to engage in painstaking research, which should undertake to establish a common denominator between the researcher and the public. It should disclose the realities of the objective situation in which the engineer of consent has to work. Completed, it provides a blueprint of action and clarifies the question of who does what, where, when, and why. It will indicate the over-all strategy to be employed, the themes to be stressed, the organization needed, the use of media, and the day-to-day tactics. It should further indicate how long it will take to win the public and what are the short- and long-term trends of public thinking. It will disclose subconscious and conscious motivations in public thought, and the actions, words, and pictures that effect these

motivations. It will reveal public awareness, the low or high visibility of ideas in the public mind.

Research may indicate the necessity to modify original objectives, to enlarge or contract the planned goal, or to change actions and methods. In short, it furnishes the equivalent of the mariner's chart, the architect's blueprint, the traveler's road map.

Public opinion research may be conducted by questionnaires, by personal interviews, or by polls. Contact can be made with business leaders, heads of trade associations, trade union officials, and educational leaders, all of whom may be willing to aid the engineer of consent. The heads of professional groups in the communities—the medical association, the architects, and the engineers—all should be queried. So should social service executives, officials of women's clubs, and religious leaders. Editors, publishers, and radio station and motion picture personnel can be persuaded to discuss with the consent engineer his objectives and the appeals and angles that affect these leaders and their audiences. The local unions or associations of barbers, railwaymen, clothing workers, and taxicab drivers may be willing to co-operate in the undertaking. Grass-roots leaders are important.

Such a survey has a double-barreled effect. The engineer of consent learns what group leaders know and do not know, the extent to which they will co-operate with him, the media that reach them, appeals that may be valid, and the prejudices, the legends, or the facts by which they live. He is able simultaneously to determine whether or not they will conduct informational campaigns in their own right and thus supplement his activities.

With the preliminary work done, one can proceed to actual planning. From the survey of opinion will emerge the major themes and strategy. These themes contain the ideas to be conveyed; they channel the lines of approach to the public; and they must be expressed through whatever media are used. The themes are ever present but intangible—comparable to what in fiction is called the "story line."

To be successful, the themes must appeal to the motives of the public. Motives are the active conscious and subconscious pressures created by the force of desires. Psychologists have

isolated a number of compelling appeals, the validity of which has been repeatedly proved in practical application. Self-preservation, ambition, pride, hunger, love of family and children, patriotism, imitativeness, the desire to be a leader, love of play—these and other drives are the psychological raw materials of which every leader must be aware in his endeavor to win the public to his point of view.

The propagandist must analyze his problem in its relationship to the basic motives of the people and the groups to which they belong. He must therefore put his case in terms that will so appeal to fundamental motives as to get the attention and support of the leaders of the vast system of interlocking groups making up his public, as well as of their publics. The milk industry, for instance, recognizing that milk has qualities that appeal to the self-preservation motive of human beings, finds that health, nutrition, and other authorities will of their own accord emphasize these qualities of milk to their publics.

A public relations campaign must also reckon with the power of symbols. A symbol may be defined as a shortcut to understanding and to action. It is the currency of propaganda. It is a word or a picture. The connection established by the “wets” between the words “racketeer” and “prohibition” undoubtedly influenced public opinion against prohibition. The acceptance of a symbol is emotional and expresses an associative mental process stemming from familiarity. That symbols must be carefully chosen is self-evident. In publicizing a vast corporation, the symbol may be a single person at the head of the organization, it may be a slogan describing the product, or it may be a single department that performs a specific public service.

It is the function of the public relations program to associate its special pleading with ideas to which the public is receptive. The potency of the same symbols is constantly changing. They must always be utilized intelligently.

Once the themes are established, in what kind of campaign are they to be used? The situation may call for a blitzkrieg or a continuing battle, a combination of both, or some other strategy. It may be necessary to develop a plan of action for an election that will be over in a few weeks or months, or for a campaign that may take



years, such as the effort to cut down the tuberculosis death rate. Planning for mass persuasion is governed by many factors that call upon all one's powers of training, experience, skill, and judgment. Planning should be flexible and provide for changed conditions.

When the plans have been perfected, organization of resources must be undertaken in advance to provide the necessary man power, money, and physical equipment. Organization also correlates the activities of any specialists who may be called upon from time to time, such as opinion researchers, fund raisers, publicity agents, radio and motion picture experts, specialists for women's clubs and foreign language groups, and the like.

At this point it will be possible to plan the tactics of the program, that is, to decide how the themes are to be disseminated over the idea carriers, the networks of communication.

Do not think of tactics in terms of segmental approaches. The problem is not to get articles into a newspaper or obtain radio time or arrange for a motion-picture newsreel; it is, rather, to set in motion a broad activity, the success of which depends on interlocking all phases and elements of the proposed strategy, implemented by tactics that are timed to the moment of maximum effectiveness. An action held over but one day may fall completely flat. Skilled and imaginative timing has determined the success of many mass movements and campaigns, the familiar phenomena so typical of the American people's behavior pattern.

Emphasis of the consent engineer's activities will be on the written and spoken word, geared to the media, he uses and designed for the audiences he is addressing. He must be sure that his material fits his public. He must prepare copy written in simple language and sixteen-word sentences for the average public (which has completed 8.8 years of schooling), though some copy will be aimed at the level of people who have had seventeen years of schooling. He must familiarize himself with all media and know how to supply them with material suitable in quantity and quality.

Primarily, however, the engineer of consent must create news. News is not an inanimate thing. It is the overt act that makes news, and news in turn shapes the attitudes and actions of people. A good criterion of whether something is or is not news is whether the event

juts out of the pattern of routine. The developing of events and circumstances that are not routine is one of the basic functions of the engineer of consent. Events so planned can be projected over the communication systems to infinitely more people than those actually participating, and such events vividly dramatize ideas for those who do not witness the events.

The imaginatively managed event can successfully compete for attention with other events. Newsworthy events, involving people, usually do not happen by accident. They are planned deliberately to accomplish a purpose, to influence ideas and actions.

Events may also be set up in chain reaction. By harnessing the energies of group leaders, the engineer of consent can stimulate them to set in motion activities of their own. They will organize additional, specialized, subsidiary events, all of which will further dramatize the basic theme.

Communication is the key to engineering consent for social action. But it is not enough to get out leaflets and bulletins on the mimeograph machines, to place releases in the newspapers, or to fill the air waves with radio talks. Words, sounds, and pictures accomplish little unless they are the tools of a soundly thought-out plan and carefully organized methods. If the plans are well formulated and the proper use is made of them, the ideas conveyed by the words will become part and parcel of the people themselves.





When the public is convinced of the soundness of an idea, it will proceed to action. People translate an idea into action suggested by the idea itself, whether it is ideological, political, or social. They may adopt a philosophy that stresses racial and religious tolerance; they may vote a New Deal into office; or they may organize a consumers' buying strike. But such results do not just happen. In a democracy they can be accomplished most effectively by the engineering of consent.

# 15

## ***Typical Action Blueprint for Public Relations Activity***

*THIS chapter presents an action blueprint as we might draw it up for a specific client for the purpose of solving specific public relations problems—for purposes of illustration, a banking institution.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE, CO-ORDINATED PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM  
FOR THE NONAME STATE BANK

-  To maintain and develop good will
-  To maintain and increase deposits and loans
-  To maintain and develop branch banking
-  To build up insurance values against attack

### *Introduction*

The plan submitted herewith is a program for public relations activities of the Noname State Bank.

A bank offers the public the intangibles of credit, service, and integrity. A bank's standing with the public depends, to be sure, on the extent of its resources. That is a tangible factor. But it depends in no small measure on intangibles as well—upon the public's attitude toward the bank's integrity and character.

A bank's standing with the public depends on the attitudes and actions of its personnel, and on the attitudes and actions of others toward the bank. Years ago, a bank's status depended upon the personal relationship between the officers of the bank on the one hand, and the stockholders, depositors, and borrowers on the other. This situation does not exist today. An individual bank like the Noname State Bank has many branches. The relationship between the bank and the public therefore depends upon the attitudes and actions of the bank as they are reflected to the public with which the bank deals. The relationship between the bank and the public depends on the actualities of this relationship. It also depends on how these actualities are reflected from bank to public.

Unless the bank tries to achieve a co-ordinated, integrated, technically efficient approach to productive action and interaction between itself and the public, there is waste effort. This lessens the possibility of achieving the bank's objectives.

If the Noname State Bank is to maintain and develop itself in the highly competitive banking field, it must make sure that its actions and attitudes reflect public desire and public demand. Its thinking must reflect the public interest; its actions must correspond with this basic approach at every point at which it impinges on the public.

The public relations plan outlined here takes these realities into account. It attempts to define the problem, to set up machinery to cope with it and to develop methods based on sound practices and principles that have already proved their value in banking and other fields.

### *Surveys as a Prerequisite to the Establishment of Policies, Strategies, Planning and Activities*

To meet the objectives through the formulation of a sound public relations policy, it is recommended that outside counsel on public relations be authorized immediately to undertake for the Noname State Bank three surveys which can be completed in a short period of time.

1. A survey to find out the sociological pattern of the city in which the main branch of the Noname State Bank is located, groups that make up the population of that city, their adjustment or nonadjustment to each other and to the Noname State Bank. After this survey is completed, an analysis should be made of the motives that guide the groups of the city population, the media of communication that bring facts and ideas to them, and the particular leaders, symbols, and motives that affect the attitudes of these groups. Such a survey is vitally important, for it will indicate basic underlying strategies and plans.

2. A similar survey should be made of the state in which the bank is located. This survey should be along broader lines. Particular effort should be made to evaluate depositor attitudes toward the bank, political alignments, industrial and agricultural alignments, and

other group attitudes that may be helpful in designing the broad pattern of conduct for the bank to follow in order to achieve its goals.

3. A third survey should attempt to evaluate bank executives' attitudes and actions toward the public in relation to standards set up by the bank; and to determine what public attitudes and actions are toward the bank in terms of the objectives set forth.

The effectiveness of these three surveys will depend on a true sampling of the publics in question. It will depend also on the intelligence with which they are planned, and, more important, on their interpretation from the standpoint of policy, strategy, planning, and timing.

It is recommended that from time to time during the year a further check be made of the groups originally questioned. This will indicate to what extent attitude shifts occur regarding important factors on which the bank is dependent.

### *The Public*

This plan is based on co-ordinated activities—co-ordinated as to policy, strategy, planning, and timing—and aimed at the following publics:

1. general public
2. present depositors and borrowers
3. potential depositors and borrowers
4. present and potential stockholders—the financial public
5. present personnel of the bank in relation to all its publics
6. group leaders who influence thought and action in all these publics

### *Strategies, Policies, Planning, and Timing*

In developing this plan, emphasis has been placed on strategies, policies, planning, and timing. The basic activities of the institution are predicated upon anticipating and reflecting public demand and public opinion.

The experience of other banking institutions and of institutions generally which deal with the public indicates that the highest efficiency is attained by the integration of the institution with the demands and desires of all its publics. Sound experience and reason

suggest that to reach the highest efficiency, every attitude and action in relation to the public should be predicated on every channel of approach's being permeated by the aims and ideals of the institution. And these aims and ideals should be further co-ordinated by effective strategy.

### *Liaison Officer—Personnel Setup*

An officer of the Noname State Bank reporting directly to the executive vice-president shall be charged with the duties of liaison between outside counsel on public relations and those heads of the bank's internal organization whose responsibility it is to deal with the public. This officer should have supervision, direction, and guidance of the planning, strategy, and timing of the following departments and such other departments as may seem necessary:

1. advertising
2. public information and public relations
3. new business
4. research
5. library
6. economics
7. certain phases of personnel department

The officers of 1 to 6 should report to liaison officer, and their policy, strategy, planning, and activities should be co-ordinated by him.

The counsel on public relations should be kept informed of all angles of impingement of the bank on the public. Working with the bank's liaison officer, the counsel on public relations will offer counsel, advice, and broad and specific recommendations for coping with situations as they arise. At the same time the counsel on public relations should keep closely in touch with outside events, trends, circumstances and activities affecting the bank.

The counsel on public relations should offer advice on how to anticipate coming events by detecting changed attitudes and actions, and how to deal with such issues as may arise. Subject to previous authorization by the bank's liaison officer, the counsel on public relations should recommend and plan specific activities and

supervise their execution through such means as may be indicated. The counsel on public relations should himself maintain personal contact with the liaison officer and heads of departments through personal meetings and by letter. Other members of the counsel's organization will be delegated to carry on continuous contact. This is suggested so that dissemination of material may be effectively carried on by personal supervision and direction and so that a continuous personal relationship between the bank and the organization of the public relations counsel may be maintained. Such a relationship has been found most satisfactory in the case of other clients.

### *Setup of Personnel to Carry Out Public Relations Program*

The program must be departmentalized. If this is done, it should function effectively and smoothly in the strategy, planning, and timing laid down after the surveys are completed.

1. *Advertising Department* should carry on its present activities, along a broad program, subject to recommendations by counsel on public relations in the purchase of space in media, preparation of copy, publication of the house organ and so forth.
2. *Department of Public Information and Public Relations* should have two letterheads for its two divisions: (a) Public Information (b) Public Relations. The department should carry on its activities under the supervision and direction of counsel on public relations and in co-ordination with the bank's publicity department.
3. *New Business Department* should carry on as before, with its activities co-ordinated with those of the broad general program.
4. *Research* should carry on as at present, co-ordinating its activities with the general program.
5. *Library* should carry on as at present, co-ordinating its activities with the general program.
6. *Economics*—the same as above.
7. *Personnel* should co-ordinate certain phases of the department with the broad general program.
8. *Liaison officer of the bank* should tie all of these departments and functions together, working in co-operation with the organization of the outside counsel on public relations. The liaison officer should be provided with the necessary assistants to handle all phases of the work outlined above.

It has been found sound practice to organize the heads of the departments listed above into a public relations committee. This committee should meet from time to time to express points of view and achieve better co-ordination. The executive vice-president of the bank should function as chairman of this committee.

### *Present Bank Personnel*

Because the Noname State Bank is a service organization, activities aimed at its present personnel are among the most important public relations activities. The service is rendered by the bank personnel. Effectiveness of that service depends on the extent to which the personnel is imbued with the broad policies and practices for which the bank stands. It is therefore recommended that the bank's personnel be regarded as the public to be cultivated most from the standpoint of building good will and business.

This activity must not be left to haphazard methods. It must be a carefully, intelligently planned adult-education activity. Its aim is to make each person involved as efficient as possible in projecting the aims and ideals of the bank to the widest possible publics. This can be done in a number of ways.

Direct, planned activity should bring about the personnel's better understanding of the bank's underlying principles, practices, and policies. This can be done through a direct course of instruction covering both banking and how to be a better public relations leader in banking and in the community.

For such activities an adult educator should be called in. This educator, working in co-operation with the counsel on public relations, should devise and develop the best way to modify the attitudes and actions of the bank personnel. Such activities should include:

1. letters
2. pamphlets and booklets, including a source book of facts and figures, and instruction manuals
3. desk presentation folders
4. possible visual or motion-picture presentation
5. indirect approaches from other leaders, outside of bank personnel, directed to the bank personnel. These approaches should emphasize certain important aspects of bank public relations and bank public behavior.



### *Public Relations Activities Aimed at the General Public*

Obviously the various arbitrarily named publics overlap. In activities designed to reach any given public, there is bound to be a spill-over into the activities designed for other publics. This, however, is an advantage.

The activities aimed at the general public will, of course, embrace all of the departmental activities—those of Advertising, Public Information and Public Relations, New Business, Research, Library, Economics, and Personnel. For each of these, there must be policies to regulate that department's activities—policy, planning, and strategy to be followed by that department. Each department will also have its timing co-ordinated with the activities of other departments. Co-ordinated timing will make all activities more effective.

No plan can embrace every possible contingency that may arise. First the basics will have to be laid down; then the basics will need to be carried out. Then provision will have to be made for the addition or elimination of ideas and plans as various contingencies require.

In advertising for the general public, all kinds of advertising must be considered—newspaper, magazine, trade journals, billboard, radio, television, pamphlet, booklet, direct-by-mail, and so on. Co-operative advertising should also be explored with a view to developing new channels for bringing the bank's message to the public.

It is out of the question, before comprehensive surveys have been made, to say what media should be used and what motives appealed to. But whatever the emphasis may be on ideas, planning and strategy are essential from the standpoint of a broad unified approach rather than of each isolated activity.

### *Present Depositors and Borrowers*

Activities planned to affect present depositors and borrowers will flow through various channels.

Strategy, planning and timing of activities should be geared to what are found to be:

1. the favorable elements to stress in the bank's relations with depositors and borrowers;
2. the negative elements to overcome in these relations;
3. the broad ideas and factors to emphasize in order to overcome the attitude of those who are apathetic or on the fence.

### *Potential Depositors and Borrowers*

Potential depositors and borrowers will respond to the many extension activities. Practices and policies to take account of attitudes of potential depositors and borrowers should be developed and carried out to achieve the desired ends.

### *The Financial Public: Present and Potential Stockholders*

Activities aimed at present and potential stockholders might well fall in the following categories.

1. The development of more and better relations with the financial public. This should be done by the Economics Department—subject always to joint approval of the head of that department and the public relations department—through contact with leaders of the financial public, who influence public attitude and action. Among these are:

- (a) The heads of great financial institutions;
- (b) The heads of financial news and other services;
- (c) The financial editors of newspapers, magazines, and other publications, as well as financial and economic writers and columnists;
- (d) Professors of economics, finance, and banking at leading colleges, universities, and graduate schools.

Here the effort should be to build up routine activities to keep these individuals and groups informed about the progress of the bank. Facts and points of view should be supplied on a routine basis. Routine activities may be supplemented with timely overt action. The bank should publish an economic bulletin, preferably a monthly, which would review and analyze economic and banking trends in the region in which the Bank operates.

2. By means of special notices included with each dividend mailing, the bank should keep its present stockholders informed on

current business conditions, as well as on the bank's policies and development. The notices may be institutional in character, or they may be devoted to new services or other activities of the bank. In addition, present stockholders should be apprised of important developments by special letters and bulletins.

Letters of welcome should be sent to all new stockholders, and letters of regret to those who dispose of their holdings.

### *Group Leaders Who Influence the Thought and Action of All These Publics*

An important public to take into account in all activities consists of the group leaders throughout the state who influence the thought and action of all the publics. Activities aimed at these group leaders should be focused in the Department of Public Information and Public Relations, functioning under the supervision and direction of the counsel on public relations. This department should carry on correspondence with group leaders throughout the state, supplying them with facts and points of view so that in time they may become the springboard for affirmative attitudes and actions.

Such contacts of the department with group leaders—from women's club presidents to newspaper editors—will develop along sound engineering-of-consent lines and provide a file that will indicate:

1. friends,
2. negative elements,
3. on-the-fence elements.

The Department of Public Information and Public Relations should also handle the preparation of lectures, speeches, and the like that will present facts and points of view regarding the No-name State Bank both on a routine basis and to take care of special situations if, as, and when they arise.

A Policy Board, composed of bank executives, should be established to determine the policy and point of view expressed in speeches, lectures, and the like to be given by bank officers. Speeches and lectures would have to be approved by the Policy Board before delivery and dissemination.

### *Relationship to Government*

Careful study must be given to the entire matter of the bank's relationship to federal, state, and local government; to educators and educational institutions; and to organizations of all kinds.

Emphasis should be placed upon the close relationship of the bank to those government departments with which the bank carries on activities.

### *Activities Directed at Maintaining and Building Insurance Values Against Attack*

The interest of the Noname State Bank may require overt action directed at modifying attitudes favorably toward the bank, should unfair attacks may be made upon it. This activity may take the form of a strong counteroffensive aimed at:

1. nailing untruths whenever and wherever they crop up;
2. projecting a broad, affirmative activity of leadership in civic and other public-interest activities.

As insurance value against unfair attack, affirmative action should be developed by the bank and its officers toward democratic ideals and principles. This can be done by the participation of bank executives in the life of the community and in democratic activities of various kinds.

### *Department of Public Information and Public Relations*

From the functional standpoint of organization, contact with the groups listed in this blueprint of action will be maintained under the two divisions:

1. Division of Public Information
2. Division of Public Relations.

These two divisions are to be centralized within the bank under a bank officer assigned to this activity.

Letters are to be prepared by the counsel on public relations for signature by the bank's public relations officer. It should also be the function of this department to handle all inquiries, compliments, and complaints received at the bank from the public.

### *Lecture Bureau*

The bank should set up a lecture bureau whose function it shall be to supply:

1. individuals to speak at important occasions;
2. talks for the bank personnel on certain occasions.

This activity should then be broadened within the framework of the program outlined in this blueprint so that the speakers and what they say will be integrated with that program. The lecture bureau's activities should be supervised by the counsel on public relations, subject to approval by the Policy Board.

### *Conventions*

Conventions offer a forum for presentation of fact and point of view. The convention program can be co-ordinated with the activities of the lecture bureau.

After policy, strategy, and timing have been settled, participation in conventions as part of the broad approach to public relations can be considered.

### *Events*

As part of the general plan, appropriate events should be arranged, under the supervision of the counsel on public relations, that would be in keeping with the dignity of the bank and would further its objectives. These events might include luncheons, dinners, receptions, dedications, and the like.

### *Motion Pictures, Radio, and Television*

Motion pictures, radio, and television will be part of this public relations program as the need arises. When, where and how these three media of communication will be used will be determined by the policy committee. Specific decisions and recommendations as to the use of these media cannot be made until the surveys have been completed.

### *Bank Premises*

Counsel on public relations will advise on bank premise changes, if any are desirable for improving public relations.

### *House Organ*

On the basis of surveys already made, it is recommended that the supervision and direction of the bank's house organ be placed directly under the Public Information and Public Relations Department. This will make it easier to gear the house organ's editorial emphasis quantitatively and qualitatively into the broad pattern of the public relations approach. Funds now allotted to this activity can be made to yield much greater results from the standpoint of accomplishing the bank's objectives if the following is done:

1. Center editorial supervision and direction in the Bank's public relations liaison officer.
2. Regard the house organ as part of the approach toward accomplishing the bank's objectives.

### *Clippings*

Newspaper and magazine articles about the Noname State Bank and related topics should be collected and pasted in scrapbooks. It shall be the responsibility of one individual to study these clippings frequently with a view to gauging trends and public reactions on matters in which the bank is interested.

## 16

### ***Achieving Goals Through the Education of the Public***

*AMONG the most important groups in our democratic society are the thousands of voluntary health organizations throughout the United States. Although these groups perform extremely valuable services, a study by one of our great foundations reports that they are not as effective as they might be. Their activities overlap and duplicate each other, their goals and scope are not clearly defined, and there is no realistic interaction between their desire to do good and the methods by which they attempt to reach the public.*

*I had occasion to deal with this problem when the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults invited me to address its national convention on "Achieving Goals for the Handicapped Through Education of the Public." The Society directs a broad program of health, welfare, education, recreation, rehabilitation, and employment for all physically handicapped persons regardless of the nature of their disabilities.*

*Its program is based on a policy which holds that handicapped persons are a normal and ever present part of society and are therefore entitled to every opportunity to contribute to society as useful citizens and to the limit of their abilities.*

*In dealing with the problems of the Society, I tried to apply public relations principles to the type of cause represented by a voluntary health organization. The best cause in the world can obtain public support only when the public is convinced that the cause is important.*

*The following chapter outlines recommendations by which a voluntary health organization can educate the public to understand and support its services.*

Every cause that tries to enlist the interest and support of the public may be thought of as an iceberg. The public is interested in and supports only what it sees, even though the portion that lies

below the surface of its vision may be much greater and more important.

Today the visibility of the National Society's cause is not as great as it might be, not because the problem of crippled children and adults is not an important and vital one, but because thousands of other ideas and interests are competing for public attention. The National Society for Crippled Children and Adults may have the best cause in the world, but the public must be convinced that it is important before it will support it. The public importance of this cause is in direct ratio to its visibility, to its being on the front page, so to speak, of the channels of communication that reach and make public opinion.

In the nineteenth century, Emerson could say that if a man built a better mousetrap than his neighbor, the world would make a beaten path to his door. In the crowded, turbulent twentieth century, so many men are making so many mousetraps that the world will not beat a path to one door unless that door has high visibility. The National Society, then must create visibility for its cause—high visibility on a national, state-wide, and local basis. This is the first problem in any attempt to educate the public for the achievement of the Society's goals.

How do you establish visibility for a cause such as this?

One method is to hold conventions. Thousands of its representatives meet in one place at one time to discuss the problem in many ways—by exhibits, by having newsworthy men and women in various fields talk to the delegates, by having demonstrations in which the crippled and the handicapped participate to show what the Society has done and can do. This makes it clear that thousands of representative Americans consider that the Society's cause is important and deserves visibility.

The large number of delegates at the Society's conventions and what they do makes news that passes through the great media of communication—press, radio, motion pictures. Millions of Americans who have not given the matter of the crippled and the handicapped much thought before will agree that this is an important subject which deserves their interest.



But any one activity of this kind in a world as competitive as ours can give only slight impetus to any idea. It cannot solve the problem of educating the public so as to make possible the achievement of the National Society's goals. No matter how many meetings, conventions, conferences, and clinics the Society may hold, there would not be enough to meet the real problem of getting basic continuing support for its goals and ideals. Educating the public is a much broader problem in social engineering.

How is this problem to be met?

Wholehearted support can come only from greater public understanding. Abraham Lincoln once said, "With public opinion on its side, everything succeeds; with public opinion against it, nothing succeeds." That is why public opinion must be won for the National Society's cause through education and persuasion in favor of the Society's activities.

Let us consider what steps must be taken in this social engineering, aimed at obtaining public support for this cause.

The first step is to ensure that the National Society's goals are realistic, attainable, and effectively refined and defined. We know that the Society is directing a program of health, welfare, recreation, and rehabilitation for the handicapped. The Society maintains that handicapped persons are a normal, ever present part of society and are entitled to contribute to society as useful citizens and to the limit of their abilities. The Society's task is to enable them to do so.

But for purposes of social engineering it is necessary to find out on national, state, and local levels whether the Society's goals are really attainable, whether they meet public needs and can elicit public response. This can be ascertained by research of the public. Research will tell whether the man power, the money, and the organizational facilities available to the National Society are adequate for reaching its goals and whether these goals are duplicated by other organizations on local, state, or national levels.

Research will also disclose whether the Society's goals are too diffuse. For instance, failure to draw up a program that specifies order of action may damage a campaign's effectiveness. Research of the public will also reveal the social forces in the community that may work with the National Society, which of their activities should

be integrated with the Society's, whose aid should be sought for the realization of the goals involved, and what groups and organizations are best fitted to work with the Society.

Other vital factors that can be determined by research are what publics the Society is seeking to educate, what special fields of activity appeal to these publics, what media can best convey the necessary ideas, what words, pictures, and events will influence the publics involved in the way the National Society wants them to be influenced.

Research will help the Society define its goals. It will also tell whose favorable attitudes need to be intensified, whose attitudes must be negated, and who needs to be converted to the Society's point of view.

After such a research survey has been made on national, state, and local levels, the next step is to consider a possible reorientation of the Society's goals. If it is found that these goals are not as realistic and sound as they might be, that they duplicate other goals, or that they are too broad or too narrow, or are based on wishful thinking instead of on the attitudes of the publics aimed at, it may be necessary to change these goals.

Research may indicate that the Society's services should be listed on a functional basis. At present they are listed under "Direct Services" on the Society's program. This term, it seems to me, lacks salability. By functional listing I mean something along the following lines:

1. *Physical services*: Under this subdivision might be listed speech defects, muscular training, and the like.
2. *Adjustment services*: Here the mental and emotional services of the Society might be listed.
3. *Vocational services*: Under this head, training and placement services might be grouped.

After goals are set in the light of research it is possible to plan for the education of the public. To be effective, this planning cannot rest its case on words alone. In a world where words have lost some of their impact and glamour, where postwar disillusionment has deflated the power of phrases, it might be well to keep in mind that

*organizational activities* must go hand in hand with the verbal barrage.

This means that the National Society's educational process must combine two activities. While selling its words to editors, publishers, radio commentators, writers, and other opinion molders, the Society must also integrate itself with the community where it functions, with the key social groups that make up the community. That is, the National Society should sell its activity to the educational, business, trade union, social service, and professional leaders to get them to co-operate with the Society.

If the Society can convince these groups of the importance of its cause, and get co-operation from them on the basis of a coincidence of interests, then the visibility of the Society's cause will be raised. And greater overt public support will come to the Society as if by magic.

This matter of creating visibility and educating the public for the needs and potentialities of crippled children and adults is not, then, solely a matter of words and news releases. It is also a matter of integrating the National Society with American society, and letting the National Society's actions speak louder than words. Then the public will give the cause of crippled children and adults the same importance as the Society gives it.

Media of communication are only conduits to the public. The words that flow through these conduits will make an impact only if they reflect work the National Society is accomplishing. And only if words enlist the participation of the entire community will this work obtain the public support it needs.

Possibly one way to educate the American public to understand the needs of crippled children and adults, and to support this cause, is for the National Society to set up a central board of strategy, consisting of representatives of the Society and of the various groups whose activities impinge upon those of the Society in social fields ranging from the National Education Association and the National Information Bureau to the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

This central board of strategy could work out both an immediate and a long-range plan of educating the public in the light of whatever

research of the public the National Society has made. On the basis of the facts revealed by research, the central strategy board could decide upon the goals, the themes, the strategy, and the tactics of the nation-wide, state-wide, and local campaigns for bringing about better public understanding and greater public support of the National Society's work in integrating the crippled and the handicapped with society.

The National Society has a cause with a wide appeal. But the cause, in my opinion, needs to be redefined to enlist the support of the men and women looking for a more specific appeal than the 28,000,000 figure of the crippled in the United States—with which it is difficult for any person to identify himself.

The public should help the National Society to extend its work to all the men, women, and children who need it. And the public will give this kind of support if the National Society will educate more people to understand that, in rehabilitating and reintegrating the handicapped, it strengthens the fabric of our society, affirms our democratic faith, and proclaims in action the dignity of man.

## ***A Typical Survey Finding—America Looks at Nursing***

*IN public relations it is not only the individual organization or its product that needs to be integrated with society. Very often it is an entire group or profession.*

*If we accept the sociologists' premise that our society is for the most part an aggregation of interest groups and group interests, we must also accept the conclusion that the mutual adjustment of these various groups is not always perfect. Some groups move ahead faster than others, and some lag behind. After a great cataclysm like a war, many groups discover that they are not so well integrated with society as they were before.*

*In World War II and afterward, this very thing happened in many cases. Individual professions found themselves left behind by other faster-moving elements of society. Such situations offer a field of action for the public relations expert. We have worked with a number of professions, attempting first to find out what the maladjustments between them and society were and then, after we found that out, making recommendations for adjustment. It may be interesting to examine one approach to this problem as a case method with practical implications for other professions.*

*In spite of the tremendous stride that nursing had made in the past three-quarters of a century, the profession still faced problems after World War II whose solution depended on public understanding and support. On the one hand, there was an acute shortage of nurses affecting the health and well-being of the American people; on the other hand, the profession needed things for itself that were in the public interest.*

*At its 1946 biennial convention, the American Nurses Association adopted a program calling for (1) economic security, (2) adequate legal control, and (3) proper distribution of nursing service. In urging better pay, better hours, and better working conditions for nurses, the ANA followed a course designed to alleviate the shortage of nurses.*

*This shortage was not due to any defection on the part of the nurses. Actually, there were more professional, registered nurses (over 300,000) than ever before in America's history. The demand for nursing care, however, had increased tremendously in recent years, far outstripping the supply. This deficiency could be made up only by improving the economic position of nurses, thereby attracting more people to the profession.*

*So, too, when the ANA called for adequate legal control, it was seeking to protect the public by having uniform state licensing laws for the profession. Although professional nurses of every state have to be registered, practical nurses without any training are allowed to practice in many states of the Union.*

*The third evil that the ANA wanted to correct was faulty distribution. Where there was one nurse for every 295 people living in cities, there was only one nurse for every 1,389 people in the rural areas.*

*To achieve its program of economic security, adequate legal control, and proper distribution of nursing service, the ANA needed the public's support. But to obtain that support, it was necessary to inform the public, to make it aware of the importance of the nursing profession for the national health and welfare, and to make it understand why it was in the public interest to back the nurses' program.*

*In connection with this attempt to educate the public along these lines, I wrote a series of articles in 1946–47 for the American Journal of Nursing, published by the American Nurses Association. I tried to show that the nursing profession could not achieve its aims by itself, that it must also enlist the understanding and support of various social groups throughout the United States. Because the basic principles outlined for nursing are applicable to many professions, they are presented in this chapter.<sup>1</sup>*

*After giving some background material about the nursing profession, I will analyze the findings of the various surveys I made to determine the attitudes of the public toward nurses and the nursing profession.*

Most of the American people have little accurate knowledge of the nursing profession. But those who do have definite ideas about its achievements and inadequacies and have made recommendations about how nurses as a group can be better integrated into our society. Here are a few of the facts and figures about this profession, which is so important to our well-being and about which we know relatively little.

In 1946 there were 318,000 active registered nurses in the United States. During World War II, more than 103,000 nurses volunteered and about 76,000 served in the armed forces. Of the approximately 1,280 schools that gave nurses' training to about 135,000 students, 69 admitted men students and 64 admitted Negro students. Only 138 offered an undergraduate program leading to a degree.

Serving in 6,511 American hospitals were 144,724 nurses. These same hospitals employed 80,105 practical nurses and attendants. Public health programs employed 20,672 nurses. The remaining number were on private duty or were employed in special clinics and hospitals.

The average graduate nurse earned from about \$2,100 to \$3,000 a year. The average public health nurse earned from about \$2,644 to \$4,000; the average nurse with the Veterans' Administration, from \$2,320 to \$4,000.

Representative sections of the American people, in response to surveys conducted in 1945-46, gave their opinions on nurses and their problems. Presumably they reflect the best-informed thoughts and ideas on nursing and its problems, because the leaders of those groups that have the closest contact with nurses were questioned. Their answers apparently provide the key to the unspoken opinions of the majority of the American people, for in a democracy the leaders must reflect the attitudes and opinions of their constituencies.

Doctors, nurses, writers, government officials, hospital administrators, servicemen, community leaders, teachers, businessmen, and social scientists were asked if they thought the nursing profession met their needs. These groups were selected for the survey for definite reasons.

Physicians work very closely with nurses, and their attitudes directly influence the profession. Nurses themselves know, or should know, how well their profession is achieving its goals. Editors, radio commentators, columnists, authors, and publishers mold public opinion through the printed and spoken word. Local, state, and federal government officials exercise wide authority over nurses, since they frame and carry out legislation that vitally affects public health. During World War II, servicemen had the opportunity to form strong and lasting impressions about nurses. Obviously, therefore, ten million returning military men and women would strongly influence public opinion.

Hospital administrators employ the largest number of nurses and are instrumental in setting salaries and working standards. Educators mold the opinions of future nurses and of the public. Civic leaders generate community attitudes through activities in local business clubs, fraternal orders, and community welfare programs. Businessmen pay taxes and donate money to support hospitals and public welfare programs. Social scientists set the pace for future thinking and acting through their teaching and their publications.

The surveys showed that these groups had certain definite beliefs about nurses and the nursing profession:

1. Professional nurses were underpaid for the high type of service they rendered.
2. Fees for private-duty nursing service were too high for the majority of people needing care.
3. Standards of nursing education should be raised; some college training, greater emphasis on bedside care and more specialized instructors were required.
4. Nurses should exhibit more sympathy toward their patients.
5. Sick people often sensed indifference in their nurses and consequently overlooked the importance of their work.
6. More men nurses were needed.
7. More Negro nurses ought to be employed.
8. More and more practical nurses should be employed to ease the critical nursing shortage and to free professional nurses for work demanding greater skill.
9. The nurse should interest herself in public health activities and voluntary medical-aid plans; these plans would stimulate the employment of nurses by decreasing the cost of their services.



10. Closer co-operation should be established between the nurse and the doctor, hospital authorities and nursing organizations, to implement unity among all groups in the medical profession.

11. The nurse's excellent service in World War II had raised her prestige.

12. A public relations program was essential; leaders themselves admitted they did not know as much as they should about nursing; they believed the public lacked information on this field; they thought a public relations program, planned to educate Americans about the types of nursing service available, and the goals and standards of the profession, should help the nurse to achieve professional status.

Is nursing a profession? This question was put to social scientists because, as specialists in social relations, they should be best qualified to judge which occupations can be considered professions.

But even they disagreed. About 50 per cent of those who answered the question said that nursing as an occupation contained the elements necessary for professional status: a fundamental body of scientific knowledge, thorough education training, and licensure by the state without which a nurse cannot practice. The replies of the other 50 per cent expressed a directly opposite view: that nurses cannot be professional because they are believed to be menial workers completely subordinated to doctors and do not command high enough pay to maintain professional status.

We cannot settle this debate. Technically, the nurse is professional. But she cannot achieve true professional status until she raises her prestige. Prestige may result from demonstrable competence in nursing, higher salaries, evidence of greater interest in public affairs, and more independence.

When government officials, hospital administrators, educators, and social scientists were asked whether they thought nurses were underpaid, the majority replied, "Yes." They believed that significantly higher salaries should be paid, because inadequate salaries failed to attract and retain the more intelligent persons.

On the other hand, civic leaders, doctors, and businessmen thought that nurses were adequately paid. With the exception of hospital administrators, this division of opinion reflected the attitude generally held by employer and nonemployer groups. As employers, businessmen, doctors, and most community leaders automatically opposed wage increases. Those who viewed the subject more

objectively, because they were not immediately concerned with operating costs, advocated salary increases.

Significantly, the majority in all groups queried opposed unions as the medium through which nurses might improve their economic status. Strong professional organizations were preferred to unions. Nevertheless, a vocal minority urged unionization as the only means by which nurses could bargain with their employers to raise pay, improve working conditions, and achieve public status commensurate with their responsibilities.

To the question about remuneration, many editors, government officials, community leaders, and doctors countered with another: "What will happen if the remuneration of nurses is raised?" This group thought that fees for private-duty nursing were already too high for the majority of persons who required nursing aid. Only businessmen, most of whom were better able to afford private nursing, declared that fees for such service were not excessive.

This conflict between what nurses should be paid and what hospitals and private-duty nurses could charge is serious. It is a common economic phenomenon and only a part of the general relationship between wages and prices. Despite this fact, and despite the fact that most of our editors, government officials, civic leaders, and physicians recognized this conflict, few of them offered any concrete ideas for resolving it. The majority of the affirmative suggestions favored medical prepayment plans.

Asked whether educational standards in the nursing profession were adequate, the leaders in all fields agreed that educational standards needed a boost. They urged the inclusion of courses in psychology and the humanities in nursing school curricula. They wanted the nurse to be abreast of current affairs and conversant with cultural topics. Nurses themselves revealed a desire to learn more about community health problems.

There was less widespread agreement about how to revise educational standards. Only educators and social scientists advocated one or two years of college. Social scientists and doctors proposed higher teaching standards, suggesting that teachers who are experts in specialized branches of medicine be represented on nursing school faculties. Social scientists and doctors also

recommended that the profession be divided into the following three categories: (1) executive and professional nurses with three or more years of training, some of it in college; (2) nurses' aids with eighteen months to two years of training; (3) practical nurses.

Apparently editors, government officials, servicemen, businessmen, educators, civic leaders, and nurses agreed in principle with this plan, because they advocated both wider employment of practical nurses and higher educational standards for professional nurses.

On the basis of this survey, we reached this general conclusion about education: Most Americans, despite a lack of specific knowledge, overwhelmingly agreed that educational standards should be raised.

Another question asked was this: Are nurses sympathetic to their patients and to community welfare programs? Only a minority of editors, hospital administrators, servicemen, community leaders, businessmen, and social scientists thought nurses should change their attitudes toward patients and community. But we know that a minority with strong views can influence public opinion, and minority opinion often reflects the point of view of a large number of inarticulate people.

This minority told us that nurses should be more sympathetic and less indifferent to their patients. Civic leaders and nurses themselves thought nurses needed more community spirit. Many people assumed that the nurse was aloof because she did not participate in important civic functions, but few pointed out that until recently the nurse's long work schedule had probably prevented her taking a normal part in community life.

Former servicemen thought nurses were too conscious of their official rank. They disliked the regulations that prevented nurses from mixing socially with enlisted men. And some were convinced that even on duty nurses gave more careful attention to officers.

Editors, government officials, doctors, businessmen, social scientists, and nurses who answered our questions said that if nurses wanted to create jobs for themselves and to gain prestige they had to become public health and community minded.

The majority opinion recommended broadening medical aid and prepayment plans to make nursing and general medical service available to people on all economic levels, because most Americans today cannot afford nursing fees. If prepayment plans were broadened, our respondents said, people could afford nursing care, and more nurses would be employed. Furthermore, the funds derived from such plans would ensure nurses a steady income. And finally, people would have more contact with nurses, would recognize their contributions to public health, and would have more respect for the nursing profession.

Attitudes varied regarding socialized medicine, but the majority of editors, government officials, doctors, nurses, businessmen, and social scientists opposed it. At the same time, although the American Nurses Association had taken no stand on the universal plan set forth in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, 63 per cent of the nurses who answered our questionnaire favored such a plan. According to our respondents, public health activities were economically and socially important to the profession.

Most of the groups included in the surveys were asked whether they favored wider employment of practical nurses, male nurses, and Negro nurses. All agreed that practical nurses were desirable, with the exception of hospital administrators, who said they would employ practical nurses only in psychiatric, tuberculosis, and chronic-disease clinics and in hospitals for the aged and the convalescent. Presumably administrators thought the practical nurse was not skilled enough for duty in general hospitals caring for the acutely ill. Doctors did not agree; they wanted practical nurses in general hospitals.

Hospital administrators, servicemen, nurses, civic leaders, and doctors favored the employment of men nurses. Businessmen were divided, probably because they were not familiar with them. Educators were lukewarm regarding the employment of men nurses; they thought incomes in this field were not enough to permit the support of families.

Almost no one denies that Negro nurses are as capable as white nurses. Yet, in reply to our survey, both doctors and businessmen divided 50–50 on whether to employ Negro nurses. The attitudes of

businessmen in our study reflected sectional feelings: the Northerners approved of Negro nurses, the Southerners did not. However, even those who agreed to the employment of Negro nurses said that they should work only in Negro hospitals. A minority opposed this segregation, suggesting that Negro nurses should at least be employed in all public hospitals.

Our survey thus indicated qualified agreement that nursing should open its doors to men, Negro, and practical nurses.

Do nurses co-operate with other groups in the medical profession? Doctors, servicemen, social scientists, and hospital administrators were queried about the nurse-doctor relationship. Their opinions varied widely, as was to be expected. Doctors thought no problem existed. Servicemen—even those not attached to the medical corps—were keenly aware of friction between nurses and doctors. They attributed it to an attitude of superiority among doctors and to their treatment of nurses as menials.

Social scientists thought that doctors treated nurses as inferiors. The nurse's acceptance of an inferior role, they said, prevented her from attaining professional status, for as long as she was subservient to another group, she could not be fully professional herself.

Only a few doctors had any specific ideas about improving the nurse-doctor relationship. They recommended interorganizational meetings, closer co-operation in nursing education and public health activities, and the exchange of literature.

Hospital authorities and doctors alike thought nurses should develop closer working relationships with hospital administrators. They attached considerable importance to this recommendation, believing that managers would thus learn more about nurses' problems and aims and that nurses would feel that caring for the sick is a vital job. In this connection doctors wisely suggested giving nurses some share in hospital administration.

The nurse's relationship with her professional organization was not close, according to the results of a survey made among the nurses themselves. Certainly this was not good for the profession if nurses were to make their demands and aims known through their organizations. One recommendation repeatedly made by the nurses

who answered the questionnaire was that their organizations should give greater responsibility and leadership to the younger members.

The preponderant opinion of our respondents in all fields was that a public relations program was essential for the nursing profession. They said that all Americans needed more information about nursing. It was urged that education about nursing be provided through all information channels and aimed at all levels and sections of American life. Suggestions included stories and articles in popular magazines, radio broadcasts, movies, and newspaper coverage. Humanize nursing, they said, and make the public aware that nurses have undergone rigorous training for the service of their fellow men. They also urged that nurses participate in community activities which promote the general welfare and so make civic leaders conscious of the nurse's point of view and her place in society.

A year was spent in obtaining and examining the opinions of American leaders regarding the nursing profession. What conclusions could we draw from our studies? Generally speaking:

1. Only a minority of all groups questioned was fully aware of the tremendous value of nursing service rendered and required in this country, and of the magnitude and diversity of the problems that nurses faced.

2. The leaders of those groups that are among the most prominent and important to American life—government officials, businessmen, and educators, for example—knew the least about nursing; doctors were actually apathetic. Yet it was precisely these men and women who could and should be the most concerned with the nursing profession and make the American people aware of its services.

3. The conventions that for so long ruled the nursing profession made it necessary for nurses to do some hard thinking and to take action to achieve recognized professional standing and improve their economic status.

In this connection the following recommendations were made:

*Self-Analysis*—If nurses hope to advance professionally, they must take the lead in appraising their profession.

*Action*—To improve their economic status, nurses could publicize their incomes by relating them to the cost of living and contrasting them with the salaries paid other professional people and skilled

technical workers. They could learn more about hospital administration so that they would understand the relationship between the cost of operation and their salaries. Armed with these data, they could request salary increases that would be intelligible and realistic and could suggest administrative changes and other ways of making them feasible.

To acquaint the community with their profession, nurses should become active in civic welfare functions and should develop an articulate attitude toward them. To inform the American people about their profession, nurses should launch a widespread educational and public relations program. This program could and should publicize their standards and aims so that the public would know them and be sympathetic to them.

Such activity should be organized on national, state, and local levels. It should be effectively planned and co-ordinated. Its objectives should be kept clearly in mind. An integrated program of strategy, themes, timing, and tactics should be developed. This would benefit both the American people and the nursing profession. The effectiveness of such a program would depend in part on the adjustment of the nursing profession's own attitudes and action to the public needs, with such changes as might be indicated.

## ***Public Relations for a Profession—A Better Deal for Nurses***

*THE preceding chapter examined some background material about nursing, analyzed the findings of surveys made to determine the attitudes of various sections of the public toward nurses and the nursing profession, and outlined certain public relations principles by which nursing could advance itself in its own and the public interest. This chapter<sup>1</sup> discusses the nurses' public relations problem in greater detail.*

In our highly complex society, no one special interest or group—whether teachers, preachers, doctors, lawyers, or nurses—dictates or governs its own destiny. Every section of our population depends upon other groups, and no individual group is sufficiently powerful or influential to achieve its desires independently and without the support of others. The decisions we as a nation make are the result of reconciling conflicting demands among groups. In broad matters of public attitude and action, the end results come from a continuous process of adjustment among these many groups.

It is of the utmost importance that the nursing profession recognize this basic thesis. If nurses do not, they will be wasting much time and hard work in their efforts to improve their situation. They cannot merely cry out their needs in the market place and expect their demands to be answered automatically by the public.

Thus the first fact that nurses must recognize in their striving for fuller professional status, for public recognition, and for economic security, is that they are the victim—or beneficiaries—of broader social forces than the nursing profession itself. They must recognize that they are only one of many social groups that make up the people of the United States, that all of these groups are interdependent and interrelated, and that the final public accomplishment of any one group, whatever it may be, is the result of adjustment, of a meeting of minds, of reaching a common understanding and recognition of the problems of others—in short, of



the group's determining where it has a mutuality of interest with other groups and acting accordingly.

Look at the position of the nurse in the postwar period. Thousands of nurses volunteered for war service, just as doctors did, and dentists, technicians, and other health-care professionals. When the war ended, most doctors and dentists were able to return to their practices and take up pretty much where they had left off. To a large degree, so were the hospital specialists and technicians. But the nurse found herself in a different and difficult position. She returned to a postwar America in which there was both a greatly increased demand for nursing service and a shortage of nurses, for which she was not responsible but for which she was partly blamed. She also found that she was expected to work on a pay scale totally inadequate to the greatly inflated costs of living. She thus became the victim of a sort of squeeze play between hospital and public, in which she was called upon to make sacrifices proportionally greater than any member of almost any other comparable group. It is recognized, for example, that teachers are justified in leaving their profession for higher pay elsewhere. But if the nurse does so, she is all too often accused of being unpatriotic or worse. Nursing groups have long recognized the injustice of their situation and have been casting about for a solution.

In recent years, a concept of public relations as a cure-all has gained considerable credence, and many groups, including nurses, have felt that if only they could use public relations, their problems could be solved. But public relations is not a panacea; it is not a magic that will automatically cure a situation. Things do not happen quite as easily as that.

Nurses as well as everyone else must realize that social change does not often move at an equal pace in all areas; it does not often proceed on a straight, or even, front. Advances in certain fields are made much faster than in others. Technology, for instance, has obviously moved ahead at a much faster rate than our knowledge of how to deal with human beings. The adjustment of people to each other in social contact—what we call human relationships—has lagged far behind the adjustment of man to the mechanical gadgets of our civilization.

The nursing profession must therefore recognize the social dynamics, the basic, conditioning factors of the situation in which it finds itself. The only way the profession can deal with this situation is to enlist the aid of other social forces in society—forces that are more potent, that have more status than nursing—and work with them toward the common over-all goal of better nursing care for the American public with concomitantly better conditions for nurses.

The nurse must do so, moreover, on a planned basis. She must react to her postwar situation more logically and impersonally and less emotionally than she has in the past. The nurses' professional groups must attack their problems with an engineering approach. That is, they must engineer the consent of the general public to their goals, so that public opinion will support their economic demands, proposed legal measures in behalf of nursing, and improvements in professional status and standards.

The first step should be for the professional groups to define their goals for themselves, and then to define them for the public. Nurses know their goals in general terms; the time is now ripe for them to be codified, ordered, and the ways and means of their accomplishment decided upon. Then will come the task of selling the public on these goals. Public opinion is created only through education, and without it the nursing groups will achieve very little. For example, let us say that a specific reform can be accomplished only by legislation, by passing a law. But that law cannot be passed until public opinion has been educated to demand it, nor can it accomplish very much by itself without public opinion to support it once it is on the statute book.

All this means, of course, that to solve their problems nurses must educate public opinion. But the first step must be to reach those well-defined groups within the public whose opinions in themselves carry weight, and who in turn influence the general public of which they are a part. Nurses must therefore enlist the support of such groups as doctors, lawyers, women's clubs, civic organizations, and the like, to an understanding of the truth that there is indeed a coincidence between their interests and the interests of the nurse. Only in this way, only by working together with others, can the end result be

brought about—better nursing care for the American public and a better deal for nurses.

## ***The Truth about House Magazines—Fifty Million Readers Can't Be Wrong***

IN the autumn of 1948, The House Magazine Institute, an association of industrial publication editors of the Eastern United States, invited me to address its members on "How to Approach Your Management." The topic suggested the wider question of how management evaluates house organs and what the impact of these publications is on the publics they are designed to reach.

To this specific problem, of interest to house-organ editors and management, I first applied the social science methods of research. I decided to write to one hundred corporation heads asking them to give me their views. But in order to evaluate the replies against a broader background, I also obtained figures on the origin and development of house organs in the United States, the ways in which they are distributed, and to what executive officers their editors are responsible.

I analyzed the replies of the corporation officers and then prepared a talk that I delivered at a meeting of the House Magazine Institute on December 9, 1948. The following chapter is based on that talk.

After presenting, analyzing, and discussing the replies given by the corporations to each question, the findings are synthesized and related to the broad picture, and suggestions are offered for improving the house organ.

This is a case in which general principles of social science and public relations are applied to the specific problems of company magazines with key publics.

How does management evaluate the house organ? To find out, I wrote the presidents of one hundred important American corporations picked at random from listings in the *Business Executives and Corporation Encyclopedia*. Among them were General Foods Corporation, Burlington Mills Corporation, The National Cash Register Company, Bausch and Lomb Optical

Company, Armour and Company, Pillsbury Mills, Inc., Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation, Rexall Drug Company, Chrysler Corporation, The Celotex Corporation, Transcontinental and Western Air, Inc., Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, and Ford Motor Company.

My correspondents represented a wide range of products—foods, textiles, drugs, machinery, steel, aircraft, optical supplies, tobacco, finance, utilities, construction materials, rubber, glass, and other fields of industrial action in twenty-one states.

I told them I was studying house organs and their relationship to management. This was a new field that required thorough analysis in order to be of greater use to management. Would they tell me about their experience with their own house organs? Would they evaluate the impact of these magazines on the public for which they were intended?

I added that I would try to chart a course for the future that might be of practical use to management, provided management told me (1) the purpose the house organ was designed to fulfill in their organization; (2) whether the house organ accomplished that purpose; and (3) what its present achievements and shortcomings were.

Of the 100 companies, I heard from forty-nine, almost a 50 per cent response. Seventy per cent of the forty-nine had house organs. Thirty-two firms answered the questionnaire in detail. It is significant that fourteen of these letters, or 44 per cent, were signed by top management—president, vice-president, chairman of the board, or other officer. This indicates a genuine interest in house organs by top management. Eighteen of the thirty-two, or 56 per cent, came from public relations directors and editors. I have, of course, no way of knowing how many of the letters signed by company officers were written by public relations directors or house-organ editors. But even if some were, it is a sign of management's confidence in the house organ and its editor.

Before discussing the replies, it may be useful to present some facts and figures on the development of house organs in the United States. This will help us to evaluate the replies against a broader background. Webster's New International Dictionary defines a house

organ as “a publication of a business concern containing articles of interest to employees and customers.” This strikes me as a sketchy definition that needs broadening.

The encyclopedias are silent on the subject; they had not yet got around to listing house organs. But we were luckier with *Printers' Ink*. They tell us that, according to their records, the two oldest house organs continuously published in this country are *The Travelers Protection*, issued by the Travelers Insurance Company since 1865; and the *Locomotive*, published continuously since 1867 by the Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company.

At the same time, *Printers' Ink* reported an amazing increase in house organs during the past twenty years. There were 575 house organs in the prosperity year of 1929. As a result of the Depression, the number dropped to 280 in 1933. By 1936 it had climbed back to 417. It kept on climbing. By 1944 there were 5,053 house organs; by 1947, 5,348—almost ten times as many as in 1929. Of this total, 2,430 were internal house organs, 1,770 external, and 1,148 a combination of both types.

The International Council of Industrial Editors, in its report of October, 1948, gives some equally interesting figures. According to the Council, industrial publications in the United States and Canada are divided as follows: 4,050 internal, 1,160 external, 420 trade and association, 360 miscellaneous. Of these, 3,213 are issued monthly, 1,240, bimonthly; 750, weekly. The rest fall into daily, biweekly, and quarterly.

About half of these house organs are distributed through the mail; half are handed out or placed where they can be picked up.

About one-third of the editors, says this study, report to the president and executive vice-president or an editorial board. About 20 per cent report to the advertising manager or public relations director. About 20 per cent report to the personnel or industrial relations director. Responsibility for the remainder is scattered.

According to the International Council of Industrial Editors the combined circulation of house organs in the United States and Canada is about fifty million. This is a formidable figure. It is more than the combined circulation of this country's daily newspapers. It is

more than two and one-half times the combined circulation of *Time*, *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Collier's*.

Certainly house organs are a far more important factor in magazine communication than anyone has realized. Yet—and this deserves serious thought—it is estimated that the combined budget of all industrial publications in the United States and Canada (including salaries, printing, engraving, postage, and art work) is only about \$109,000,000.

Against this general background, let us examine the replies of the corporations to the questionnaire.

Of the thirty-two corporations replying in full, there were twenty-seven with internal house organs. The rest had external or both.

The first question asked management was "What is the purpose of your house organ?" The replies varied because the purpose varied. The twenty-seven corporations that publish internal house organs utilize them for three separate purposes:

1. as a direct line of communication to individual employees;
2. as morale builders;
3. as media of sales promotion through employees who are not salesmen.

The corporations that publish external house organs emphasized four purposes:

1. to give information and keep the company's name before customers at all times;
2. to discuss retailers' problems, economic trends, promotion plans, display ads, and similar matters;
3. by story and picture, editorials and features that go beyond advertising and news releases, to project the company's leadership in engineering, design, and manufacture;
4. to give dealers necessary information about new products, services, and company policies, accompanied by an effort to instill greater loyalty and co-operation based on the feeling that the dealers are part of one big company.

Since the companies in the survey predominantly emphasized internal house organs, let us discuss in greater detail the three purposes they are designed to meet.

How does the house organ function as a direct line of communication from management to the individual employee? In some companies, the house organ educates, entertains, and interests the employees in the policies and potentials of the company. One correspondent wrote: "The house organ publicizes important changes of personnel or policy, new uses of products, what other plants are doing, annual reports, and other financial information in simple form."

Others said they use the house organ to develop closer coordination of interest and purpose, to correct misinformation, to integrate employees and management, departments and plants, bridging the gap between work place and home, and humanizing the management. And one company described the house organ as a line of communication to the employees, saying: "We try to tell WHAT we are doing, WHY we are doing it, and HOW it will affect the employees."

In describing the house organ as a morale builder, various companies said they used it

1. to publicize employee activities, bolstering morale through recognition in print and providing an outlet for self-expression through contribution of copy;
2. to instill pride and loyalty in the company;
3. to promote the best possible employee-management relations;
4. to create mutual respect, advance mutual interest, and preserve mutual understanding;
5. to strengthen social ties among individual employees;
6. to project leadership of management and employees in civic activities;
7. to promote the good will of employees and their families;
8. to remind employees that management is interested in their well-being;
9. to foster a feeling of unity, to create better teamwork based on confidence, and to seek the goal of one team with one purpose;
10. to help visualize individual jobs as a part of the company's total activity;
11. to strengthen the sense of job security through feature articles on long-service employees, the company's stability, etc.;
12. to promote community spirit with the company.

One company wrote that the major purpose of its house organ is to advance the interest of the company, with and through employees, by creating the greatest possible understanding on the part of the employees of the conditions required for any enterprise to become and remain a good employer; to increase knowledge of what the



company has been able to do through freedom of opportunity and good management; to supply employees and their families with facts about the company; to help employees visualize their jobs as part of the corporation's whole activity; to remind them that management is interested in them and their well-being; to entertain, interest, and help them with information useful in their personal affairs.

The third broad purpose of the internal house organ was described as sales promotion through employees who are not salesmen. According to the replies to the questionnaire, the house organ accomplishes this by acquainting employees with the wide range and variety of the company's products, their use, and their application. The house organ also introduces new products, outlines promotion techniques, announces advertising devices and display aids. As we have seen, the external house organ also emphasizes these aspects of sales promotion.

Does the house organ today accomplish its avowed purposes? On this vital question the replies from management and editors alike were almost unanimous. Nearly everybody said that the house organ does do so. Only one company said no. They said they had discontinued their house organ because they did not believe it served any useful purpose, and possibly there was harm from too much petty gossip. But even this company is not wholly lost to the cause. They are now considering the publication of a newspaper instead of a magazine.

The companies which reported that their house organs do meet their purposes gave various reasons for this conclusion. One cited the interested and enthusiastic body of readers that their magazine enjoys and the word-of-mouth response in its favor. Another said it had made a survey which revealed that its house organ has four readers per copy. A third company based its affirmative conclusion on requests for reprints and permission to republish, as well as response to give-aways; and a fourth on the demand for additional copies. Other companies predicted the success of their magazines on recognition by professional newsmen and awards.

After due weight has been given to these reasons, the most important fact, it seems to me, is still the almost unanimous

agreement by management and editors alike that the house organ, as it exists today, meets the purposes for which it is published.

The third question in my letter of inquiry was "What are the present achievements and shortcomings of the house organ?" Half of this question was automatically answered in the replies to the previous questions. Since management and editors believe that the house organ covers the necessary ground and meets its purposes, they naturally believe that its achievements are considerable.

The replies, however, also commented on the shortcomings, problems, and dangers of the house organ. Some correspondents said the house organ must be broad without becoming too commercial. One company said the house organ must avoid handouts and never become merely the voice of management. Another pointed out the difficulty of coverage where people are scattered throughout the offices and plants of a coast-to-coast production network. Still another urged that reader studies be made, so that editorial policy could be worked out to conform with trends in public thinking. Some correspondents pointed out that to present serious problems in a readable style is always difficult. Many invoked the bugaboo of time, which haunts all editors. Those who edit house organs are subject to the universal need of editors to get fresh news and fresh ways of presentation.

On the score of contributors, however, the house-organ editor has special problems. Some correspondents wrote that they had difficulty in getting senior officers to contribute to the company magazine. Others found it hard to get employees to contribute because they felt it would be presumptuous for them to do so. Some correspondents urged that house organs must avoid controversies; others said they should avoid too much gossip.

As for broad policies, some correspondents said that house organs ought to publish material that dramatizes the relationship of the company to the whole of American economy. A few commented on budget limitations; but these limitations, like the limitation of time, are always with us.

Certainly this survey indicates that house organs today have a very important place in the minds of American management. Company heads do not take the trouble to discuss matters that are

not of major interest. The fact is, management at top levels is very much interested in watching the house organ, appraising it, and even running it. This deduction seems to me a fair one from the high percentage of response to the questionnaire, and from the specific replies which I have summarized.

This interest is highly encouraging. But I wonder whether we should feel encouraged by the fact that so high a percentage of management thinks the house organ fulfills its purposes and that its achievements are great, while its shortcomings are relatively unimportant. Obviously, management is satisfied with the house organ as it is today; otherwise it would not continue publishing this type of magazine. But is management right or wrong in its judgment? Is the house organ, in its present form, adequate for its avowed purposes?

So far the only answer we have had to this question has been a series of generalizations provided by management and editors. Now let us attempt to answer the question by a different approach—by examining the actual contents of the house organ, the ideas and information it offers its readers.

A report by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company analyzed the contents of 399 employee magazines published during 1947–48. The report shows that the editorial contents of these house organs fall into the following categories:

1. efforts to increase efficiency
2. editorial comment
3. messages from executives
4. official announcements
5. general information about the company
6. financial information about the company
7. information about the industry
8. company services for employees
9. corporate activities of employees
10. personals
11. recognition of employees
12. promotion of health and safety
13. economic information

14. news of outside happenings
15. political news
16. material for wives and children
17. interest builders
18. miscellaneous

Of the 399 house organs analyzed, 348 use personals; 268 publish news about athletics, and 252 about clubs and recreation; 203 run safety stories; 149 cover service anniversaries; 144 write up products and advertising; 141 deal with plant expansion and modernization; 130, with marriages; 126, with economic information; 120 run obituaries; and 120 have suggestion systems. On topics of a more fundamental nature, however, the coverage is not so good. Of the 399 publications surveyed, only 22 cover business conditions; 9, dividends; 14, prices; 9, costs of equipment; 5, industrial relations policy; 9, price policy; 14, wage plans, Only 2 cover taxes; 2, hours; and only 2 even so much as mention strikes. This means that house organs, on the whole, ignore some of the most vital concerns of the employee.

The true state of affairs in this respect is revealed by a survey made by the International Council of Industrial Editors, which queried industrial publications about their coverage of union activities. Only 21 per cent of those who replied said they printed news of union activities regularly. Twelve per cent ignored the question altogether. Sixty-six per cent said they did not publish news of union activities. Only 12 per cent said they publish articles or items about union contract negotiations; 66 per cent said they did not publish news of union activities. Twenty-one per cent did not answer the question. Only 3 per cent reported that they published articles or items about grievance settlements. Twenty-one per cent of the house organs queried did not answer this question, either.

Only 32 per cent of the editors said they attended company meetings when employee relations policies are discussed. Forty-seven per cent said they did not attend such meetings. Twenty-one per cent did not answer the question.

One of the most significant sections of this survey involved a matter of the utmost interest to employees everywhere—the Taft-Hartley Act. Of the house organs surveyed, only 13 per cent

published articles or items about the Taft-Hartley Act. Sixty-seven per cent did not publish anything on this subject. Twenty per cent did not answer the question.

A similar refusal to face reality is revealed by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey of the contents of employee magazines. It shows that less than 10 per cent of the house organs surveyed discuss such problems as arbitration, bonuses, holidays, hours, industrial relations, job evaluations, plant rules, price policies, strikes, union contracts, vacation plans, wages, and the like. Now, these subjects are precisely what interest most of us—and certainly they are what most interest employees and would fulfill the stated purposes.

As for financial information about the company, the survey reveals that only 5 per cent of employee magazines discuss taxes, sales, prices, investments, business conditions, financing, dividends, costs, collections, and similar subjects. So here, too, in the matter of attaining objectives, the house organ fails to give its readers the information they want or need.

This is hardly the fault of the house-organ editors. Basic policy originates with top management in 33 per cent of the cases and with the advertising or public relations department in 20 per cent. Ultimately, however, it is management that is responsible for the over-all contents of company magazines.

And yet, in spite of the fact, management believes that the house organ today accomplishes its purposes as a means of communication between the company and its employees, as a morale builder that creates better understanding between management and men, and as an effective instrument in advancing the American way.

I have been told that there is a study showing that employees like to read about sports, personal items concerning themselves, and similar matters. No doubt they do. But it is unrealistic to let a study of this kind determine the contents of the company magazine. House organs should not compete with tabloids. They have a far more important purpose to accomplish, and management says so.

For one thing, theirs is primarily an educational function in the key area of economics. Surveys have shown how profound is the

ignorance of the American people about the economic facts of life. This fact has been confirmed in studies made by *Factory Management Magazine* and *Fortune*. We are a nation of economic illiterates. This has practical consequences that must not be ignored. Many strikes arise from grievances between management and men that are primarily based on economic ignorance. In many a business there is acute maladjustment between management and employees that is due above all to the fact that the employees know nothing about the economics of that business. Obviously, economic illiteracy must be overcome if we are to have an economically stable America and world.

What is the house organ doing to solve this vital problem? Management admits that overcoming the economic illiteracy of employees is one of the prime functions of the employee magazine. But basing content mainly on findings of surveys which show that employees like to read about the Dodgers and the marriages of their fellow employees will not contribute one iota to their economic education. Certainly, if you are trying to reach a specific goal, you will never do it by refusing to face it, particularly when others *are* facing it in a realistic way.

What conclusions can we draw from all this?

In a recent issue of the *New York Times*, C. F. Hughes, who writes on the business point of view, said that there was one lesson contained in the 1948 Presidential election that was bound to receive major attention in industry and trade: Somehow or other, business is still far apart from the thinking of the American people. "High management imagined that it knew what the citizens were thinking, until it was discovered that what was supposed to be in the bag fell right through."

It is clear that management and editors alike—those who bear the responsibility for the publication of the company magazine—ought to give greater action-related thought to developing a more realistic editorial policy than the one which now prevails. If the house organ is to fulfill its purposes, it must deal realistically with those problems that we know are deep in the minds and hearts of millions of employees—problems that did much to bring about the surprising turn in the 1948 election.

The complacency with the house organ as it exists today is hardly justified by the realities of the contemporary American scene. In view of this, it seems to me that both the editors and management might take to heart the lesson of the election and the lessons implied in the house-organ surveys, and apply these lessons in a new and revitalized attitude toward the problems which, with the rest of America, they are facing today.

House-organ editors ought certainly to achieve the purposes set for their magazines. But in doing so, they ought to reach deeper into the minds of the publics involved. It seems to me that house organs must deal with the fundamental issues in which their publics are vitally interested. At present, the house organ touches too sketchily on crucial matters that concern the publisher, that is, the company, and on equally crucial matters that concern the readers, that is, the employees.

In the light of the revelations made by my house-organ studies, I suggest that we have something to learn from trade-union house organs. Consider, for instance, the magazines published by the AFL and the CIO. Within the framework of the private-enterprise system, which they accept, these magazines are based upon a point of view that differs from that of management house organs in vital areas. But this point of view is presented by direct reference to all the major interests of the employee. Here the very reader whom company magazines are trying to reach with their view finds a full, realistic treatment, from labor's view, of the very topics the company magazine tends to avoid.

If labor publications like *The Pilot*, house organ of the National Maritime Union, or the *Textile News* wield a tremendous influence, it is primarily because they deal effectively with those topics that most interest employees; because they are, in effect, the one place where the employee today can learn about the economics of his industry.

Trade-union leaders in the clothing industry who are interested in maintaining equitable industrial relations between management and men have told us that one of their principal jobs is to educate the employees in the current economic realities of the companies for which they work; they do this through the trade-union magazine.

Here is a specific example. There is an increase, let us say, in the wages of steel workers at a time when the wages of clothing workers remain static. The latter naturally urge their union to demand a wage increase for them. At this point, the union leadership, through the union house organ, explains to the workers why wage increases are possible in steel but not in clothing. It acquaints them with the competitive factors in their own industry. It gives them a lesson in economics in connection with a specific issue—a lesson whose practical consequence is better relations between management and men.

It seems to me that the time has come when the company magazine must also deal with the fundamental issues of contemporary America. If the company magazine is to accomplish its purpose; if it is really going to be a means of communication between the company and its employees, if it is to be a morale builder that creates better understanding between management and men, above all, if it is to be an effective instrument in advancing the American way, it can only do so by speaking to its readers about the essential, paramount things that concern them.

The fact is that these things concern us all. They are at the core of the twentieth-century crisis. And the house organ's point of view in dealing with them must be that of our common stake in society—the stake that means everything to management and employee alike—the supreme stake of maintaining our American democracy.



## ***Salesmanship and the Public Relations Approach —Hidden Markets in the Human Personality***

*SALESMANSHIP is one of the basic factors of our economic system and a characteristic aspect of American life. Today the old-time “drummer” and traveling peddler have been replaced by trained retail clerks, house-to-house canvassers, manufacturers’ representatives selling to jobbers and retailers, and sales executives, many of them vice-presidents of huge corporations.*

*The methods and traditions of American salesmanship have spread from business to other fields of activity. Efforts to make use of modern sales techniques and to transform them into tools of mass persuasion are made daily by insurance companies, banks, investment houses, public utilities, organized charities, political parties, schools, churches, and other organizations. American salesmanship has aided our mass-production system.*

*Basically, salesmanship still follows principles established more than half a century ago. Obviously, however, we can strive for sales goals only with some understanding of human nature. To arouse interest in people, we must know what people are really like, what really arouses their interest.*

*In a talk before National Sales Executives, an organization of top company officers in the field, I suggested that by taking advantage of the new knowledge of man and society as now being developed by America’s thirty thousand social scientists, our sales executives, distribution system, and business in general could open the hidden markets in the human personality. The following chapter develops this idea and makes some specific recommendations for carrying it out in practice.*

The United States leads the world in the many varied aspects of direct selling. We have developed selling techniques brilliant in their effectiveness, without counterpart in any other country. In the many years in which I have been practicing public relations, I have,

however, been struck by one basic lack in the prevailing approaches in American distribution—the neglect of our hidden markets in the human personality. This is our most important unexplored market and public relations can make specific recommendations on how to sell in that market.

Selling is moving a product from producer to consumer. The word “consumer” is a convenient abstract word, of course, but it is only an abstraction. We sell goods to people. We attempt to persuade men and women—human beings—to buy our goods or services. To do this successfully, we must have the clearest idea of how people function. And to understand people, we must know not only how the body works, but why we think and feel as we do. Here our whole personality comes into play. Our family background, our childhood experiences, our culture pattern enter into the decisions we make at the counter. All kinds of pressures, subconscious and unconscious, condition our actions. These invisible factors of human personality must be brought to light and understood if we are really going to deal with our markets effectively.

Nobody ever saw the laws of physics. These laws are invisible; they are mental concepts. But without understanding them, we would not have radios, automobiles, or airplanes. The atom bomb that exploded over Hiroshima was also the result of factors and dimensions nobody ever saw, but which Einstein and other scientists apprehended in a physics formula. So, too, with our unseen personality factors—and it is they that really control our conduct. The decision of the customer to buy or not to buy takes place in this invisible realm of his personality.

Assuming this, we can approach our customers in three ways; first, we may intensify an existing favorable attitude; second, we may negate an unfavorable attitude; and third, we may convert a passive attitude into an active one. Note that all three approaches deal with attitudes—with reactions of the human personality. These approaches must be based on a realistic understanding of human nature and conduct.

Unfortunately, a good deal of salesmanship today is still based on an antiquated eighteenth century notion. Our fathers sincerely believed in the myth that when it comes to business, everybody can

be neatly pigeonholed as the Economic Man with the tidy additional qualification of a few instincts—sex, self-preservation, and desire for food, shelter, clothing. But we know from everyday experience, and science knows more fully from patient investigation and experiment, that there is no such creature. The human personality is far too complex to be pinned down to any simple formula. It is infinitely more complex than market research reveals.

The human personality has inner and social needs of many kinds. We all have hidden urges to which we respond—anxieties, insecurities, inferiorities, resentments—which play a part in our desire to buy. Though they are hidden, they can be charted. We have neglected most of them in appealing to numbers of people. We appeal to sex, or to a desire for status, of course, but a person's approval is more involved than that.

Market research, for instance, usually reveals only the chronological age of customers. But people have four other ages as well—mental, physical, emotional, and societal. And these ages do not always match up in one individual. We should know in broad terms all the ages of our publics. The nature of many people, for instance, makes it possible to sell them toy railroad trains and comics, even though they are adults.

The ordinary survey may give us the wrong reasons why people act as they do. The answers they give are rationalizations; they are a cover-up. The consumer's inferiorities and his desire to compensate for them may affect our sales, as in the case of show-off merchandise. People do not make decisions, including the vital one of buying goods, solely on the basis of advertisements, facts, logic, or so-called instincts.

Here is an example of how human personality affected the sales of a great chain store. People refused to buy its goods, we found out, because the company did not recognize a union, it did not observe an eight-hour day, the goods came from certain countries, and the customers did not like the nationality or the politics of the store managers.

This is a simple illustration of what I mean when I say that people are *people* and not abstractions. Their decision not to buy at that chain store was determined by hidden factors in human make-up

which had nothing to do with economics. The sales executive must face, understand, and be guided by these factors.

Here is another example of how business ignores the workings of the human personality. Pick up a Negro newspaper in Harlem and read the advertisements. These ads are trying to sell goods to Negro consumers, yet most of them are illustrated with pictures of white men and women. Has it ever occurred to the companies that run those ads to study the feelings of their Negro customers toward whites? Or the effect of those advertisements on the consumers?

A sales manager of a condensed-milk company suggested a label for a can to be sold in India. He wanted the label to carry a picture that looked like Elsie the Cow. Fortunately it was pointed out that the cow is a sacred animal in India.

Of course, every sales manager uses psychological, social, and cultural approaches in his sales. But they are often conventional and intuitive approaches, not based on scientific knowledge.

For instance, an advertisement shows a beautiful girl wearing a girdle. The assumption of the sales manager is that women will identify themselves with this beautiful girl and therefore buy that girdle. But is this the actual reaction of women to that advertisement? A scientific investigation might show that women are unconsciously jealous if the poster girl is prettier than they. The advertisement might create an unconscious sales resistance instead of encouraging sales.

Some years ago we made a study of customer reactions to leather shoes and soles. We found that leather-soled shoes were bought in greater quantity by more middle-class adults who had been poor as children than by other groups of adults. The reason was that as children their torn soles were a sign of inferior social status. When they became adult and well-to-do, they compensated for their sense of social inferiority in childhood by buying more shoes than they needed. They bought extra shoes, not because they needed them to wear, but for psychological reasons.

A psychological need is invisible; it is hidden in the personality. But it is a very real need, and it has a powerful effect on the market.

To understand hidden markets in the human personality, the attitude poll or so-called market research, is not enough. To find out

why we behave as we do, we must go to the social scientists. They have analyzed and broken down much of our conduct into such concepts as rationalization, projection, sublimation, and compensation. Because formulation of the laws of the physical sciences dates back more than 150 years, and because their results—from the steamship to the atom bomb—are so spectacular, we are all aware of their importance. The social sciences are only half a century old, but their findings are already of the utmost importance. It would be to our advantage to make greater use of them in our sales efforts.

The psychologists are discovering more and more about how the mind works. The sociologists are giving us greater and greater insight into the way various social groups function. The social psychologists have an expert knowledge of how groups react as distinguished from the way individuals react. The political economists have investigated and tested the way economic and political groups act and react under varying circumstances.

All these social scientists, working in universities, in field expeditions, and through their nation-wide scientific organizations, are making studies and findings of the utmost importance to business. Yet many businessmen, scarcely aware that they exist, fail to take advantage of their knowledge.

However, Professor John W. Riley, Jr., of Rutgers University, recently reported that budget-conscious business interests spent some \$27,000,000 in 1948 in putting social-science methods to work—an increase of \$17,000,000 over 1938. Business applied this sum to market research, production, personnel relations, purchasing, financing, and consumer preference. In 1948, social-science service cost the government \$52,000,000, or three times its cost in 1938. And in 1949 the military establishment spent \$7,000,000 for social science studies in human resources, personnel selection, morale factors, leadership, fatigue, and so on. Social science was also employed in the war.

Figures prove that the social sciences are an important part of American business. But from the standpoint of selling we have only scratched the surface.

Here is an example of the kind of scientific finding about the human personality and American society that is vital to us if we are to make more effective use of the hidden markets. It is the *Manual for the Study of Food Habits*, a report of the Committee of Food Habits of the National Research Council, a division of the National Academy of Sciences. This committee was composed of top-flight social scientists; its executive secretary was the eminent anthropologist Margaret Mead.

One section of this report is of special interest to sales executives. It shows general and regional attitudes toward food in the United States. It shows how nutritional theories influence social change, what the cultural classifications of food are, how food is a symbol, its cultural basis, how the attitude of parents influences food preferences, the role of utensils and cooking habits in food preferences, and so on.

These scientists studied food from the standpoint of psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and home economics. They found that certain foods become associated with low social status and are therefore rejected; other foods, like white bread, sugar, and meat, become symbols of high social status. They give us a scientific picture of the standards that determine party foods, like turkey, birthday cake, and ice cream; and how parents, by praise and punishment and example, fix a child's food habits. In some places children prefer ice cream to spinach, but in Cedar Rapids, for example, they think green vegetables and fruit juice are "swell," while candy, cake, ice cream, and hot dogs are "terrible."

The *Manual* tells us what effect previous experience has on the selection of food. Under what circumstances can preferences be altered? In what way do social and emotional conditions influence attitudes toward food? What techniques have been developed to study food and taste preferences? And finally, what techniques have been used to *change* food choices? Obviously, unless we know the answers, we cannot sell foods really efficiently. Food is not merely a thing to be sold. It is a whole configuration of things scientists have studied. The results of their study are available to everybody.

And what is true of food is equally true of other commodities—of automobiles, nylons, vacuum cleaners; of flour for apple pie and

flowers for the table. The social scientists have investigated the personality of the American in relation to many products; and what they have not studied, they are equipped to study, given the opportunity.

The important thing for the field of distribution is to take advantage of the knowledge and skills of our social scientists in order to integrate this field even more fully with the dynamics of American society.

Every segment of American society can advance itself along the road of greater efficiency and higher status by planning. I believe that a long-term plan of integrating distribution with the social sciences would give business a most powerful instrument for using creatively the hidden markets in the human personality. I know this is easier said than done. I also know how much we can do once we set our minds to it. Therefore, I suggest the following four-point program by which American business might take advantage of the techniques and findings of the social sciences:

1. Add a leading educator to the company's board of directors, someone like the dean of a leading school of business administration. This would give the company continuous, direct contact with the scientific groups engaged in studying our society.

2. Then go to specific fields of education and add to the board of directors one or more social scientists—a great sociologist like Professor Robert Maclver of Columbia University, who knows more about groups and group functions than anyone else I know of; or a prominent psychologist like Professor Gardner Murphy of the College of the City of New York. Men like these would give business direct working contact with the social sciences and the men and women who are making studies of specific interest to business.

3. Executives should also apply their energy to integrating salesmanship with the social sciences by building and keeping up to date a social-science library in the office. The books, magazines, brochures, and bibliographies published by various universities, scientific bodies, and individual scientists would give executives and their staffs valuable knowledge which they could use for their own practical purposes.

4. To facilitate this work, it would be useful to assign one or more staff members to read, analyze, and digest the social-science publications that come to the office, and prepare reports on developments, so that executives could conveniently keep informed of developments in the field.

At the level of statistics, market research, and attitude polling, American business already avails itself of the social scientists' findings, with considerable profit to itself and the country.

The sales executives of America can now take this process a step further and tap the hidden markets in the human personality by integrating their sales techniques with the discoveries which our thirty thousand social scientists have made and are making about man and society.



## ***Public Relations in the Theatrical World—The Crisis in the American Theater and Some Possible Solutions***

*IN the summer of 1949 the League of New York Theatres, Inc., association of theater producers, asked us to make a survey of the American theater. In accepting this assignment, we told the League that to be most effective, a survey of this nature should include: (1) representative sampling of general public opinion, broken down into the attitudes of the various socio-economic groups with reference to age, sex, educational, social, cultural, religious, business, and ethnic backgrounds; (2) research of literature relating to the field, for basic factual information and broad general trends of the thought; (3) intensive sampling of the professional point of view of all those engaged in the theater, to obtain representative factual information and opinion.*

*We also pointed out that, in view of the particular field of opinion to be surveyed and the limitations of time, this survey should seek to obtain as broad a coverage of general facts and attitudes as was possible to get.*

*For purposes of fact and attitude finding, the country was to be divided into two main sections—New York and the rest of the United States.*

*These general principles were accepted by the late Brock Pemberton, president of the League.*

*We further suggested that the survey of the socio-economic groups be conducted by a combination of two methods: depth interviews and letter interviews.*

*In the selection of the samplings, for both the personal and the letter interviews, careful preliminary study was to be made to ensure an adequate sampling of the various ethnic and cultural groupings. In making such an apportionment, the income levels, for example, were to be carefully divided between highest, upper middle, lower middle, and lowest. The number of letters and interviews in each*

group was to correspond roughly to the percentage that each income level bore to the over-all income picture of the United States.

The same technique was to be employed in the breakdown of age, sex, business background, and other relevant factors.

For the investigation of existing literature on the theater, we undertook to provide trained researchers who would make a study of the material in the New York Public Library, specialized libraries pertinent to the field, and theatrical trade publications. The literary research of the survey was to provide a broad background of historical and contemporary information concerning the role of the theater in American society, and a bird's-eye view of both the long-existing problems and those due to the increased complexity of the modern sociological pattern. It would also give a perspective on previous approaches to the maladjustments between the theater and the public, with information concerning results obtained from them.

The section of the survey dealing with intensive sampling of the professionals was to obtain the points of view of all sections of the theater. Such interviews, it seemed to us, would be particularly valuable in revealing not only basic information but also areas of agreement and disagreement and suggestions for improvement based on first-hand experience.

On the basis of the information obtained, we would make recommendations as to how the theater might meet the current crisis, taking note of successful methods previously employed in the United States and other countries in bringing the theater and the general public together, with an evaluation of their applicability to the present situation. In addition, the recommendations would present a detailed blueprint of action designed to negate as far as possible present unfavorable attitudes; to intensify all existing favorable attitudes; and to create favorable attitudes among those sections of the public that did not have any particular feeling for the theater one way or another. The recommendations would take into consideration the part that could be played by group leaders throughout the country in achieving these goals.

The recommendations would also (1) outline steps that should be taken by the theatrical profession itself to achieve the desired results; (2) outline a general publicity campaign to be carried forward

*for the common purpose; (3) include strategies to employ in future activities, themes to emphasize in such a program in cooperation with various groups of the public, and the media of communication that should be used; (4) specify the organization necessary for effectively carrying out the project and for its proper timing.*

*The complete survey (running to 850 pages) and the recommendations were submitted to the League of New York Theatres at its annual meeting in October, 1949. At that meeting, I read a summary of them. This chapter covers the survey summary and is also based in part on an article, "Theatre Survey," which appeared in the December, 1949, issue of Theatre Arts magazine.*

When the League of New York Theatres asked us to make a survey of the American theater, we decided that though such a survey could not touch on the deeper factors of contemporary history that make the theater what it is or tackle the mystery of how great plays are born, we could apply the techniques of the social sciences to meet the League's objectives.

The universal crisis through which the world is now passing had affected the theater, like all other forms of thought and art, and the theater needed to adapt itself to a world that had changed profoundly since *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *The Devil's Disciple*, and *The Hairy Ape*.

### *Theater Figures*

Figures highlight the decline of the American theater. In 1912, Broadway produced 38 shows. The curve swung steadily upward till the season of 1928–29, when Broadway produced 224 shows. The graph has gone down ever since. In the season of 1948–49, Broadway produced only 70 shows, a drop of 70 per cent in twenty years.

The number of New York playhouses has followed the same pattern. They increased from thirty-eight in 1913 to seventy-five in 1929. Then they declined steadily. In 1949 there were only thirty-nine. They continue to vanish at the rate of two or three a year. Not a single theater has been built in twenty-two years. If this rate of

decline continues, in a decade or so we may expect to see legitimate theaters in New York disappear completely.

The theater in 1949 occupied a very small sector of the vast entertainment field. Movies, radio, and television had a combined capital investment of seven billion dollars; movies spent four hundred million dollars a year on production; radio billings totalled two billion a year; the theater spent only five to six million a year on production.

So, too, with audience figures. There are 96,000,000 radio sets in America and every week seventy million people go to America's approximately 18,500 movie houses. But in peak months, the legitimate theater entertains only five hundred thousand people a week.

The League asked us to do for its members—most of New York's theater producers and owners—what we have done in the past quarter of a century for corporations, trade unions, governments, educational institutions, scientific groups, and individual theaters. They wanted us to make a comprehensive survey that would help them to correct maladjustments within the theater and between the theater and the public. To give the League the kind of survey it required, we attempted to discover the social dynamics of the situation.

The figures quoted above show the theater's economic crisis, but the crisis pervades every aspect of the legitimate theater.

### *The Theater and the Public*

We are confronted by maladjustments among the groups within the theater and maladjustments between the theater and the public. But society deals with a disturbance in industry by invoking law, or public opinion, or both, if it wants what an industry provides. Chaos and crisis brought the Interstate Commerce Act to the railway industry, the Pure Food and Drug Acts to the food and pharmaceutical industries, and the Volstead Act to the liquor industry.

When we made the survey, theaters to some extent were already regulated by law, in brokerage ticket sales and theater building regulations. And certainly the public through adverse criticism and nonsupport was making its voice heard.

As is clearly evident, the best way for an industry or profession to avoid unnecessary or drastic moves by law or public opinion is to undertake prior action to bring itself in line with public desires both within the field and in relation to the public. The baseball industry and the movies have done this.

The League had told us its three major objectives:

1. to broaden and strengthen the role of the theater in the social and cultural life of America so that the theater may enjoy the high status in the public mind to which it is entitled;

2. to improve relations between the public and the legitimate theater; and

3. to increase theater attendance by intensifying favorable attitudes of regular and occasional theatergoers, and by recruiting new theatergoers.

To get a balanced perspective of these objectives, we used a modern technique, which we have used successfully in other areas, to discover both the maladjustments within the field and between it and the public. Our method is to attempt to discover the social dynamics of a situation, the interrelationships existing between the various groups that make up a profession or field of industry, and, in turn, the relations between the field and the public, with a view to making recommendations that will correct and improve the situation. Polls and questionnaires are subsidiary devices, mere tools for fundamental techniques.

### *Five Inquiries*

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, we made five basic studies in analyzing the problem. First, we examined the existing literature on the theater, analyzing over one hundred books and magazine articles to give us historical background and a clear perspective. We also reviewed previous published and unpublished studies on the theater.

Second, we conducted personal interviews with thirty selected theatrical leaders nominated by the League of New York Theatres, including producers, critics, editors, box-office treasurers, brokers, theater owners, actors, actresses, officers of theatrical unions, and

playwrights. They disclosed basic information, conflicting points of view, areas of agreement and disagreement, and suggestions for improving the theater.

Third, we conducted depth interviews with four hundred men and women of upper- and middle-bracket incomes. Selected by the League, they were representative of the theatergoing public in nine cities throughout the United States. These interviews gave a qualitative measure of public opinion with regard to difference in age, sex, income, and geographical location.

Fourth, by mail questionnaires we approached the heads of various occupations and professions, selected from *Who's Who in America*, and also people in middle- and upper-income groups in twenty-seven cities throughout the country on a representative geographical apportionment. These people were asked thirty-five questions concerning their likes and dislikes, adjustments and maladjustments, so far as the theater was concerned.

'Fifth, we made a study of London West End methods of ticket sale and distribution to find out whether any lessons could be applied from the English to the American scene.

### *Opinions of Theater Leaders*

First, let us consider what theater leaders told us about the theater. They discussed the things they thought were important: the over-all situation, the theater audience, production, employment, ticket distribution, theatrical facilities, noncommercial theater, playwriting, and so on.

### *Economic Maladjustments*

In evaluating the crisis, theater leaders emphasized economic maladjustments, such as the high cost of producing plays, of theater rentals, of sets, props, and costumes; the high price of tickets and the public's inability to pay for them, especially with the addition of the 20 per cent federal tax; the high cost of actors and other theater personnel; the insecurity of employment in the theater and consequent high labor costs; the rigid, uneconomic building code and the problem of ownership and control of theater buildings; bad

ticket distribution; “gyp” ticket sales; railway costs; the short theater season; “feather-bedding”; the competition of the movies, radio, and television for creative talent; and current business conditions.

### *Maladjustments in Creativity*

Theater leaders also emphasized maladjustments in creativity: the shortage of good scripts, the flight of the best playwrights to Hollywood and radio, the lack of experimental theaters, the failure of producers to encourage summer theaters and college talent and the failure of actors to take advantage of the stock company as a training school, the refusal of stars to play on the road.

### *Producer Co-operation Needed*

In considering the contribution of production to the theater crisis, some said that producers plan and handle productions in an unbusinesslike way, that they fail to co-operate with each other in dealing with their problems and in pooling theaters, that they waste money making sets, that they skimp on road shows and withdraw them as soon as movie rights are sold.

Some suggested that the theater needs central property warehouses, manufacturing of sets outside of New York, a rental basis for properties, a reduction in rehearsal time, more Sunday performances, and an all-year-round theater season. It was also said that union rules make try-outs difficult.

### *Ticket Distribution*

In the matter of poor ticket distribution, theater leaders stressed the operation of “gyp” brokers, the low allowance to legitimate brokers, the drain on seats at hit shows by theater parties, the lack of special-rate tickets for students, and failure to sell tickets for good shows after these have taken their cream off the market. Some told us that producers are not interested in controlling diggers and scalpers, that they tolerate the present system of tickets for marginal shows, and that they do not co-operate as they should with honest ticket brokers.

Some thought the way to overcome the evils created by brokers’ greed is to establish a centralized system of ticket distribution. And

some suggested that large theaters should sell tickets at \$2.00 tops, and larger houses at \$1.80 tops.

### *Poor Promotion*

A number of theater leaders emphasized that the theater follows outmoded and inefficient promotional and advertising methods in selling tickets and that not sufficient promotion of the theater as a whole is carried on via radio, television, and general advertising. Some said the theater crisis is partly due to lack of subscription seat sales, failure to take advantage of show trains, and poor promotional methods in regard to hotels, railways, conventions, and the like. Producers, they said, pass up the possibilities of the road, which can bring them new audiences, and neglect the mail-order business.

### *Unfriendly Personnel*

Theater leaders had much to say about how the theater deals with the public. Many blamed the present crisis on the discourteous attitude of theater personnel. Box-office men, they told us, are often rude; ushers and other employees fail to handle the public properly. Theater personnel that comes in direct contact with the public is not closely supervised, as in other organizations dealing directly with the public.

### *Public Education Needed*

Some theater leaders wanted to educate public schools and communities to appreciate the vital importance of the theater in American life, and felt that many producers have an unrealistic approach to the public and the press.

### *Critics*

As for the critics, some theater leaders thought they ought to be more aware of their power and influence, that they should attend try-outs of plays and make suggestions for improving them, that they should educate the public to give up its addiction to the star system, they they would review plays more accurately if they sat in different



parts of the house, as the audience does, and saw the play through to the end.

### *The Public's Faults*

Theater leaders had plenty to say about the public, too. The public contributes to the theater crisis, they told us, because it wants only hit shows and stars. It has become sophisticated and demands plays that are increasingly difficult to find. Furthermore, theater leaders said, the public does not understand the economics of the theater, and doesn't even know how to buy tickets. People do not appreciate the role of the broker, who saves them time, carries their accounts, and gets and delivers tickets. And some said that the public still suffers from a psychological hangover induced by the bootlegger era and wartime boom—it wants to be gypped. And it wants the theater to give it nothing but escapist entertainment.

### *Public's Opinions from Four Hundred Depth Interviews*

What is the theatergoing public's opinion? I shall touch only on the most important findings of the interviews with four hundred men and women of middle- and upper-income groups in nine selected cities.

### *Play Preference*

We found that musical comedy is well ahead in general preference, with serious drama second, comedy third. Then came romantic drama, historical plays, tragedies, and mysteries.

One-third of those we interviewed make it a practice to see the latest hit shows, especially in New York. They told us the commercial theater was available in 85.9 per cent of the communities we investigated. But only half this number said they preferred the commercial theater.

### *Theater Attendance*

The average person interviewed goes to the theater four or five times a year. In New York the figure is nearly six times a year. People go to the theater less now than they did either during or before the war. Compared with wartime attendance, the decline is

5.8 per cent; compared with prewar attendance, the decline is 12.3 per cent. For New York the figures are higher: compared with wartime attendance, the drop has been 10 per cent; compared with prewar attendance, 18 per cent.

What does the public think would remedy this decline in attendance?

Three-quarters said they would go to the theater more often if tickets were less expensive. Nearly 67 per cent would go more often if they were offered the kind of plays they like. Ticket scarcity was cited everywhere as an important factor.

### *Physical Comfort in the Theater*

People throughout the country want more comfortable theaters, better acting, and more New York plays outside New York. The biggest complaint about physical matters was discomfort, particularly lack of leg room, too narrow seats, too hard seats, and seats with poor visibility. About 20 per cent, of the persons interviewed mentioned the need for proper ventilation. Others wanted better acoustics and more modern equipment.

### *Ticket Distribution*

The interviewees mentioned four factors in the business of obtaining tickets, in this order: tickets are sold out for a long time in advance—70.6 per cent mentioned this; seats are sold at a premium; it is hard to get cheaper seats; no telephone orders are accepted.

Only about 10 per cent reported paying more than \$5.00 per ticket. The average price was just over \$3.00; it was higher in New York, of course.

### *Theater vs. Movies*

Sixty-two and one-half per cent of those interviewed spend less on the theater than on movies. The figures are about even between theater and sports events. They spend twice as much on theater as on opera and concerts, but 69.5 per cent spend less on theater than on home entertainment. In New York, however, they spend about as

much for the theater as for movies. There, too, theater spending far outweighs opera, concerts, and sports.

### *Cultural Value*

It may interest you to know that 82.6 per cent of those we interviewed—that is, the vast majority—consider the commercial theater an important factor in the cultural life of their city. They said it provides a better type of entertainment, has educational and cultural values, helps community betterment, broadens life experience, stimulates the mind, furthers aesthetic appreciation, is more effective than the movies, and has good social implications.

### *Public Opinion from 5,000 Mail Questionnaires*

*All these findings were confirmed by the mail questionnaire* that we sent to 2,500 group leaders in various occupations selected from *Who's Who in America* and to 2,500 people in upper- and middle-income levels in twenty-seven cities throughout the country on a representative geographical apportionment.

The percentages were somewhat different, but here, too, most people complained of the high price of tickets, suggested improving the physical comfort of the theaters, said tickets were hard to get, and so on. And here, too, the vast majority considered the commercial theater an important factor in the cultural life of their city.

### *The London Theater Survey Findings*

In our survey of London theaters and the public, we found that distribution of tickets is much more highly organized. Brokers utilize a widespread network of branches and subagencies in hotels, steamships, high-class clubs, larger restaurants, and leading shops. These branches and subagencies work on a commission basis and clear all operations through their broker's main office. Things are so organized that every broker can tell quickly what tickets are available for every performance. Vouchers good for admittance are issued, thus eliminating the necessity for patrons to spend their time standing in line at the box office to exchange vouchers for tickets.

Brokers and box offices have high standards of courtesy and service. Their staffs are trained and encouraged to see as many plays as possible and to read the various criticisms so that they can, when requested, give advice. Seating arrangements for theaters are displayed on posters in brokers' offices and in theater lobbies so that patrons can tell exactly where their seats are located. Pamphlets listing current attractions in all theaters are widely distributed, so that if a person cannot get seats for a show he wants, he will be encouraged to go to another one.

### *Solution*

Obviously the American people like the theater. Our nationwide survey gave some idea of what they expect from it and what they think is wrong with it today. It told in specific detail why theater attendance is lower today than it was during and before the war, and what complaints both the public and theater leaders have made. This information gave us a starting point for constructive recommendations designed to deal with the theater crisis and to develop better relations within the industry and between the theater and the public.

The survey showed that the theater crisis is a complex problem that arises from the interaction of social and economic factors and involves many intricate relations, attitudes, and action on the part of many different elements in our society. However, experience in other fields has shown that there is a broad solution to problems of this kind. That solution is possible when a voluntary association within the field assumes leadership and takes action along a wide front to bring about conditions that are both in the public interest and in the interest of the industry.

Here is the approach we recommended:

A challenge to leadership in this situation presents itself to the League of New York Theatres. We recommend that the League assume it. If it does not, some other group may. The League has the membership, the tradition, and the resources. It has the opportunity to enlist the forces within the theater, public opinion, and the law to work out the necessary solutions. To proceed effectively, the League must reorient its organization structurally to deal with the problem.

Specifically, we recommend a multiplecommittee setup to cope with the major problems revealed by the survey.

### *The Committees*

These committees would deal with such broad problems as educational relations, government relations, group relations, advertising and promotion, theatrical production, theatrical financing, theater buildings, press relations, fair business practices, employment problems and practices, and travel and transportation. These committees would be in addition to an over-all public relations committee, the executive director of the League, the necessary secretariat, and public relations counsel.

Committees of this type would make for a stronger League because they would identify the membership closely with the organization and provide expert assistance in specialized fields.

This method has been employed effectively by organizations as diverse as the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the National Association of Broadcasters, the American Medical Association, the American Management Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Iron and Steel Institute.

### *Statement of Public Relations Policy*

Simultaneously with such action, we recommended that the League draw up and announce a statement of public relations policy; this statement to tell the public in clear, concise language how the League intends to deal with the public. We recommended that the statement cover all those elements of the legitimate theater in which there is a public interest—the theater's role in enriching the national culture, standards for entertainment, equitable practices in the distribution of tickets, and courtesy and honesty on the part of all those who deal with the public. The purpose of this statement was to give evidence of unity and co-operation within the industry and serve as a bench mark for the conduct and individual action of the members of the League.

We told the League that after it had agreed upon what it wants to do, had set up the necessary structure, and provided a realistic budget, it would then be ready to implement its public relations program. We recommended that the League's director, officers, and public relations counsel should work in co-operation with the various committees in integrating, co-ordinating, and implementing the program.

### *Recommended Activities*

We recommended two types of activities for the League:

1. Activities in fields where League members, producers and owners, had direct control over the attitudes and actions of others. This envisaged the education and training of theater personnel and the development and standardization of effective methods and procedures for them to follow.

2. Activities in fields where League members had only partial or indirect control over the attitudes and action of others. This envisaged negotiations and direct tie-ins with other groups within the theater and with the public, enlisting public support by keeping the public informed and educated about the theater, and enlisting public opinion for modifying the law.

Some important specific recommendations we made to the League regarding attitudes and actions over which League members could exercise direct control were these:

- 📖 Handbook for producers based on exploration and appraisal of the most effective methods and practices in theatrical production to aid them in cutting costs and increasing efficiency.

- 📖 Short intensive workshop course on advertising and promotion, emphasizing ways and means to improve promotional techniques and to increase public good will and understanding.

- 📖 Educational program for box-office people, brokers, ushers, concessionaires, and others to assure the theatergoing public of courtesy and efficiency.

⚙️ Continuing activity to strengthen the present Theater Ticket Code of Fair Practices, to assure fair treatment of the public, and to combat unscrupulous practices in ticket distribution; this to be directed by a committee in fair business practices in co-operation with brokers, box-office treasurers, theater owners and producers, civil authorities, and some impartial agency such as the Better Business Bureau.

⚙️ Consideration by a committee on theater building of ways and means to improve physical equipment and comfort of present theater houses—seating, lighting, ventilation, acoustics, etc.

⚙️ Manual of suggestions for owners, producers, box-office people, and brokers on extending and improving ticket sales methods, subscription plans, mail orders, etc.

⚙️ Continuing study of public opinion on the theater.

⚙️ Fact-finding study of present theater financing and exploration of ways and means to raise new venture capital for the theater as a legitimate business enterprise.

⚙️ Preparation of joint-producer mailing lists of known and prospective theater-ticket purchasers in New York and road cities.

⚙️ Co-operative promotion aimed at expansion of out-of-town theater audiences for New York through show trains, party plans, subagents, etc.

⚙️ Periodical bulletins for theater managers, brokers, owners, producers, and other leaders in the industry to serve as a clearing house for information on public relations efforts.

As for attitudes and actions over which League members could exercise only partial or indirect control, we made recommendations such as these:

☛A continuing program of information to all the mass media of communication—newspapers, magazines, radio, printed matter, and direct mail—and to writers and commentators, to get a more complete and accurate portrayal of fact and point of view—this activity to be supported by a press relations committee which would confer on major policy and relations between the theater and the press.

☛A symposium on the theater conducted by mail among leading social scientists and cultural leaders.

☛A conference on the role of the theater to be held for leaders in sociology, economics, history, and psychology at a reputable university.

☛A campaign to reduce the 20 per cent federal amusement tax on theater tickets. (This was, of course, before the Korean war.)

☛Exploration with publishers and similar legitimate commercial channels of possibilities for co-operative public service tie-in.

☛Co-operation with key women's organizations, government agencies, and other groups, inviting their interest and support in improving the theater and raising its social and cultural status.

☛Co-operation with educational institutions at all levels in promoting and developing a broader understanding and appreciation of the theater and in training students for the theater.

☛Actions and events to stimulate interest in the theater among young people—including a pamphlet on employment in the theater, essay contests, and other activities.

☛Stimulation of public interest and participation in the theater through various types of awards, prizes, scholarships, contests, exhibits and displays, specially arranged visits to theater buildings of historic interest, Theater Speakers' Bureau to supply speakers for clubs and schools, lithographed souvenir postcards of notable plays and players, bulletins listing all current theater attractions, anniversary celebrations, and the like.



☛ Fact-finding and research of ways and means to extend and improve traveling attractions throughout the country.

The recommended program was a two-way street. It was a program of action to change the League's own attitudes and actions, while educating the public and enlisting its support. By presenting the public with the facts, by explaining the reasons for every situation, by reviving the great tradition of the theater, and by meeting the public's needs, we felt that the League could alter the relations between the public and the theater in the direction of its three major goals.

## ***Direct Mail: A Challenge to Research in Humanics***

EVER SINCE people began writing letters to each other at the dawn of history, direct mail has been one of the most important media for communicating ideas and affecting opinion.

*The ancient art of letter writing goes back to the fourteenth century B.C., when the Egyptians mailed stone tablets to each other; and, in China, to the twelfth century B.C., when the edicts of the Chou emperors were delivered by the postman. Our own intercolonial mail service was organized in 1692, although it was not until 1847 that the first United States postage stamp was issued.*

*Today the United States Post Office handles forty-three billion pieces of mail a year. Many of these are personal. But just as many—perhaps more—are sent out in direct mail campaigns by all kinds of individuals, organizations, and groups that employ this medium of communication to promote sales or advance a cause.*

*This chapter, based on a survey made for the Mail Advertising Service Association of New York, attempts to analyze the public relations aspect of direct mail as a medium of persuasion.*

When the Mail Advertising Service Association of New York asked me to analyze the public relations aspects of direct mail, I decided to quote these experts to themselves. To accomplish this purpose, I used their own medium of communication—direct mail.

The secretary of the Association gave me a list of the larger users of the mails. To everyone on that list I wrote a letter stating my purpose and asking for his individual wisdom on a number of important problems that concern direct mail practitioners. I received many long, interesting replies, as was to be expected from those who use direct mail successfully. To probe the mystery of effective direct mail further, I supplemented my written questions by personal conversations with top practitioners in the field, like Nicholas Samstag and Frank Pratt of *Time*, Inc.

Then I reread the literature of the field—books, magazine articles, and pamphlets such as Henry Hoke's entertaining and meaningful *Dogs That Climb Trees*. Finally, I added, subtracted, and interpreted all this in terms of my own thirty-five years of public relations experience in using the mails. Here I shall set down these findings briefly.

To begin with, the experts disagreed. Most of them appeared to belong to two main schools of thought about direct mail.

The first of these might be called the formula school. In our scientific, mechanistic civilization, many of us try to transfer the formula idea from pure and applied science to our human relations. Hence this school of thought maintains that there are basic rules of direct mail which can be generally applied to its successful operation. This group believes in the kind of preceptual technique with which we are familiar in many phases of American life—the use of such maxims as the ten rules for foot health, the five-point program for safety on the highways, and so on. This school starts with the premise that all you need for success is to follow the right set of rules.

For example, one representative of this school wrote me that the physical appearance of a letter is the most important factor, because “a letter is not even read, or at least has two strikes against it, if the appearance is poor.” Second—and equally important, he said—were the stationery and method of reproduction, “because it is so important to create a friendly mood with warm color and quality paper.” Content he listed “definitely third,” because the “preceding qualities must be good if content is to be read in a receptive mood. The content is important because it must carry the interest of readers long enough to tell the story and move them to action, to get the reader to send in the return card.” Fourth in importance he listed techniques to facilitate response so as “to create speed of action.” Fifth was the class of mail used. But this, the respondent said, was important only “when speed in getting returns is necessary.”

Many of the replies I received fell into this formula school of thought, but most of the respondents who believed in formulas agreed that the most important factor in direct mail is content.

Physical appearance was second. This was followed by method of reproduction, class of mail, facility of response, and stationery.

There is a second and equally articulate school of thought about direct mail. Its most vocal member is Nicholas Samstag, a brilliant practitioner of the art.

This school believes that all formulizing about content or appeal is largely poppycock. According to Mr. Samstag, effective direct mail stems from the application of the technician to his work. Successful mailing results from a blend of experience, skills, and aptitudes working on three basic principles: (1) know what to do and do it; (2) have no inhibitions and try everything; (3) test and test and test. The third principle was confirmed by Boyce Morgan of the Kiplinger Washington Agency, who said, "The only safe thing to do in direct mail is to test and test again, and keep on testing until you know from experience how your own product can best be sold by mail."

This school, which substitutes experimentation for formula, maintains there is no royal road to a 3 per cent or a 22 per cent or a 45 per cent return. A four-page letter may wow the recipient one day and not the next. A letter was a failure yesterday? Tomorrow it may be a success because events and conditions will have changed.

One of the most effective mailings ever sent out by *Time* was a million letters with charred edges. The edges of the letters had been rubbed with kerosene and then burned. When the recipient took the crumbling page from the envelope, he read: "The Nazi flame is licking at the coasts of England." That letter was a brilliant stroke at the time it was used.

The followers of this philosophy believe in know-how backed by experience and activated by invention. They do not deprecate rules or formulas. They know them, but say, "So what!" Formulas are dangerous, because even if you follow them, you may have a poor piece of direct mail. And then what? Formulas become part of a person's thinking rather than tools in themselves.

Some of my respondents replied in ways which fitted neither the one philosophy nor the other. Richard Simon, of Simon and Schuster, wrote: "A product must have a 'this means me' appeal. It must be helpful. As publishers, we have found it impossible to sell 'literary' books by direct mail. The only books that we can sell by mail

are those that perform a service for the reader or else those which show that a book which was once at a higher price is now at a lower price.”

Simon and Schuster also stressed the importance of content. They told me that one of their most successful direct-by-mail campaigns was for their *Treasury of Art Masterpieces*. They ascribe its success to two things: (1) people with culture and money became more and more interested in art during the latter part of the nineteen thirties; and (2) a book which reproduces art masterpieces as well as possible and with the greatest authority back of them, at the lowest possible price, does well. The book had the authority of Thomas Craven who had written books on art; but far more, it contained work by the great artists from the Renaissance to modern times.

The need to put direct mail on a more scientific basis is shown by the deviation in percentage of responses received from successful mailings. For example, the McGraw-Hill Publishing Company reported that in 1930 they received a 22 per cent return in subscription orders at \$3.00 each from a direct mail campaign on their magazine *Electronics*. The Grolier Society in their most successful campaign (for their *Book of Knowledge Annual*) received reservation orders from 80 per cent of their mailing. The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company in their best campaign received a 22 per cent response.

In their letters to me, the users of direct mail suggested a number of ways to make it more effective. Among the improvements many of them felt to be most needed were, first, lower costs—both in production and postage—and, second, greater accuracy and more careful selection of lists. By lists, I do not mean merely blocks of names taken out of indexes, directories, and mass-produced books. Mailing lists represent the result of careful sociological studies of the particular market groups to be reached.

A third improvement cited as necessary was in mailing-company services, as, for example, automatic collating and inserting. In addition, some organizations listed improved letter content (fresh approaches, analysis of recipients, and so on), improved government service (lower postage, greater speed in handling), and a few mechanical improvements, as in addressing and fill-in.

But would these suggested improvements really do the job of making direct mail efforts as effective as they should be? Doesn't the answer to this problem really lie in a more fundamental approach?

Users of direct mail must recognize that they are specialists in communication, not artisans in mechanics of reproduction. They must undertake research in two highly important fields of human knowledge: (1) the art and science of communication by mail; and (2) research into the nature of human beings.

Communication includes language, lists, letterheads, envelopes, printing, addressing, testing, and mailing. Human relations research includes the study of emotions, character, and mental characteristics of the recipients. Communication as a whole is one of the major problems facing the world today. In one sense our civilization is in a race between communication and chaos. We know that what we call society is only a network of partial understanding of people by people held together by communication, in which the mails play an important part. Every transaction between buyer and seller involves some form of communication.

We have come a long way in our physical ability to communicate with one another, from stone tablets, drum beats, message sticks, and pebble markings. But despite speeded-up technology, the psychological barriers remain. How can we most effectively use language to make ourselves understood? At best, words are poor substitutes for meanings. Language often distorts. It is not objective. The science of semantics has resulted from a basic effort to clarify meanings. Here are two examples of communication research that illustrate these points.

One of my friends, a greeting card manufacturer, recently co-operated with the University of Chicago in a study of the meaning and impact of the words and picture symbols on greeting cards. It was found that certain conventional symbols for Mother's Day, Christmas, and other ceremonial occasions were not necessarily the most potent. As a result his business has been completely revolutionized and has become even more successful.

The second example is Rudolph Flesch's readability studies. Mr. Flesch proved conclusively that many books and newspapers are

written above the heads of their intended readers, and a number of publishers have put his findings to good account.

There must be other fields of communication research that direct mail users could profitably explore. In this research, universities, colleges, and foundations would doubtless be eager to co-operate.

The second field of research I recommend is the study of man's behavior. The sociology, psychology, and other social science departments of American and foreign universities are studying the nature of man, his attitudes, his characteristics; in short, why we behave like human beings. Much of this knowledge is still in doctoral theses tucked away in libraries or in obscure learned journals with small circulation. It should not be allowed to remain unused. One of the greatest services direct mail users could render would be to rescue it from its present obscurity.

To be sure, we recognize and apply some of our present-day knowledge of the factors motivating human beings. But we have only scratched the surface. With the knowledge available today it is neither visionary nor impractical to seek to determine scientifically the drives and needs of those to whom direct mail is sent. Their great variety and complexity need not be discouraging; one can strike at common basic factors.

For example, a sense of insecurity is almost universal today. In some people it manifests itself in snobbism, in great ambition, in a drive for power. Aggressiveness is usually an overcompensation for insecurity, and such aggressiveness can often be channeled—through letters as well as other means—to fight an evil.

Some men need admiration and some find relief in gregariousness. Some are expansive and have a compelling urge to express themselves. Others are driven by exhibitionism; they have to attract notice. Some are egotists with a strong belief in their qualifications for leadership. Some are martyrs and eager to align themselves with unpopular causes. Some are contrary-minded and take the other side of every proposition. Some are extremely suggestible. Many people are ready to go along with a good cause, for innumerable Americans are altruistic and kind and respond to an appeal to their social consciousness. They want to help worthy ideas, causes, and people. But they have to be individually reached,

and using the results of research in human relations will enable you better to employ the techniques of communication.

That is why direct mail needs research that will broaden our knowledge both of communications and of human behavior, and make available the present findings. Carrying on direct mail is practicing an applied social science. Business conducts research in chemistry, physics and other physical sciences and applies the results to everyday practices. No paper manufacturer would attempt to operate without knowing down to a decimal point the amount of acid necessary for bleaching. But there is a terrific time lag in employing the techniques of the social sciences.

Direct mail covers many aspects of communications and of human behavior. It involves the whole process of engineering the consent of those whom it is trying to influence in a highly competitive civilization. It should receive the benefits of the most scientific methods in order to carry out its social function most effectively.



## 23

### ***Advertising In Behind the Times—Culturally***

*ADVERTISING has had a phenomenal growth in the past half-century. But in recent years businessmen and advertising experts have been wondering whether the advertising field is as effective as new conditions in our ever changing society require. As this problem was being discussed in the field, Printers' Ink published an article of mine in the March 30, 1951, issue of the journal. This chapter is based on that article.*<sup>1</sup>

People resist new, useful inventions. We yelled at the early automobiles, told them to get a horse. We hooted at the Wright brothers.

Resistance to change is even greater in accepting new ideas about human relations. This resistance causes what social scientists call the cultural time lag. H. K. Nixon, some years ago, pointed this up in a report published in the *American Journal of Psychology*. Students at Columbia and New York Universities were asked whether the following statements were true or false:

Has man five senses?

Does the study of mathematics give you a logical mind?

Does the face reveal the level of a person's intelligence?

Are women morally purer than men?

Is intelligence increased by training?

Is there telepathic influence in your eyes when you stare intently?

Despite their falsity, many of the students believed these and other antiquated notions implied by the questions. They had accepted the general opinion that surrounded them. They had not caught up with the social science which had proved the statements false. They were suffering from a cultural time lag.

Let's apply these observations on the cultural time lag to advertising. But first a definition: Advertising is the act of making known by public notice and is, by extension, the art of announcement or offering merchandise for sale in such a manner as

to induce purchase. Advertising has adopted advancements in technology as they have come along—from fifteenth-century printing presses to twentieth-century skywriting and television. But it has failed to exploit equally revolutionary developments in the social sciences.

As has been pointed out, in the past half-century the social sciences here and abroad have explored the human mind and the forces that govern it. They have codified laws governing the behavior of people individually and in groups. Thirty thousand social scientists in the United States—psychologists, social psychologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, anthropologists, and sociologists—are today specializing in the study of man and society. These experts in our American colleges and universities have, through experiment and observation, accumulated an immense fund of knowledge and techniques. The great number of books, periodicals, and unpublished studies deal scientifically with what people are really like, how they really behave, and why they behave as they do.

Advertising, it seems to me, has neglected these data as a working tool. By and large, it has tapped only segments of this broad field of rapidly expanding and basic knowledge. It is more interested in buying and selling space than in finding out its relation to the whole process of persuasion. Some use, it is true, has been made of semantics, the science of words, in persuading the customer to buy. But the mainstay of advertising is a word magic of the kind that pervaded all primitive cultures which ascribed power to oaths, incantations, interdictions, and curses. Advertising clings largely to a propaganda of words. It does so despite the fact that today we know from the laboratory experiments of social science that words have lost much of the power they were formerly thought to possess. In primitive society, the medicine man sometimes successfully cured the sick man by word enchantment. In our highly sophisticated society, words have no such power.

Actually, the use of words and pictures is only one tool in the process of fastening people to established patterns of belief and conduct, of converting them to new attitudes or activities in their purchasing habits, and of negating potential attitudes or patterns of conduct. What name we give to the process is unimportant—

advertising, engineering of consent, the art of persuasion, public relations, opinion leadership. The process of persuasion is broader in scope than words. Obviously, to be effective, it must use communication in some form. But it includes many other factors that modify human behavior toward specific goals.

Advertising is re-education. The social sciences have shown that “re-education influences conduct only when the new system of values and belief dominates the individual’s perception.” And words, except in crisis situations, are not sufficient for this purpose. If I cry “Fire” in a crowded theater, people will stampede because they assume there is a fire. If I cry “Wolf” in a Siberian village, the peasants will run. But if I cry “Wolf” on Fifth Avenue, the word will have no impact.

The social sciences have found, and experience has confirmed, that we do not decide to buy goods or to do anything else, for that matter, solely on the basis of the words we are exposed to. The response to a symbol like a word is dependent upon the person who hears or sees the symbol. The human personality is too complex to be persuaded to change by simple impacts, except in crisis situations.

Market research does not give us the answers we need to solve our problems of effectively planned persuasion. The answers we get from market research may give us the wrong reasons for people’s acting as they do, particularly if the survey simply quotes what people say about their actions and attitudes. Our only solution lies in the application of what the social scientists have discovered about the mainsprings of behavior.

Psychological research has shown that we ourselves are not always aware of the real reasons for our conduct. We don’t tell the researcher that we buy punching bags to relieve our aggressions, or mirrors to gratify our narcissism, or a book on etiquette to improve our social status. We often cover up our real motives in our answers and rationalize them.

Therefore the approach to persuasion, to advertising in the light of today’s knowledge, must be based on a deeper study and research of man and his behavior.

In the past half-century, the social scientists have isolated and described two important factors, the study and knowledge of which, it seems to me, are fundamental to advertising approaches.

One is the culture matrix. Our main conditioning factors lie in our culture pattern, the environment in which we are born and grow up. The culture furnishes the pattern for our way of life, our communication and thought, the food we choose, the clothes we wear. As individuals, we derive our entire life organization gradually and unconsciously from our group.

Stuart Chase recently put it this way: "At a rough guess 90 per cent of the average man's behavior in any given society is automatically determined for him by the rules he begins to learn almost the moment he is born. Even when he personally decides to go here or there, as soon as he gets here or there, he follows the behavior proper in that location, whether it be a fancy dress ball, an automobile assembly line, or a crap game. . . . Underneath all the conflicts that divide individual, families, political parties, pressure groups, religions, ideologies, lies this broad, strong foundation of common agreements, due to the culture we share together." A scientific knowledge of American culture patterns as analyzed by Helen and Robert Lynd in their books, *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition*, and by Lloyd Warner's *Yankee City* series appears to be fundamental to a sound advertising approach.

Another crucial concept dealing with our conduct that social science has isolated and described is that of individual personality. Individuals vary structurally and functionally. At birth we have little personality. Gradually the culture pattern helps to form the general characteristics of our personality, but various other factors, including the family, develop the unique personality of the individual. Soon we begin to play a definite role in life.

Our total behavior reveals our personality. Three levels of the personality function simultaneously and interact one on another: the conscious (ego), the unconscious (id), and that of the conscience (superego). All of our actions and attitudes have causes. These are not necessarily logical. The reasons for them are not always observable to the outsider. Often they are not known even to the individual himself. Unconscious drives affect our behavior. These

drives are conditioned by early experience. Childhood conflicts which have not been resolved may affect our adult behavior. Frustrations of gratification lead to repression, regression, displacement, identification, projection, or isolation, and so to personality change. The *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* by Sigmund Freud give a good description of this. Consistent study of these findings and others, as they are published, is now imperative for the advertising man. From the social psychological point of view, Newcomb and Hartley's *Readings in Social Psychology* is a good book to start on, and *Approaches to Personality* by Gardner Murphy and Friedrich Jensen is recommended as a difficult but rewarding book.

We cannot depend upon common sense to give us direction in our efforts at persuasion. We must, instead, look to the social scientists to learn why people do or do not become our customers. To bring about certain changes of action in a personality involves a reorganization of attitudes, a modification of philosophy, establishing a new role or a new pattern of behavior. These can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Since customers are people and we are trying to effect change in one direction or another, it is necessary for advertisers and advertising men in all branches of persuasion to know how these changes are brought about. The answers to these questions do not come from market research, unless we already know what the experts in the social sciences have found out about human conduct and change. No surgeon would think of operating unless he had studied anatomy.

Here are examples of what I mean. Ego motivation is a strong, basic drive in most people. People protect their egos above other things. Social scientists have shown that because of ego motivation, people by and large perceive only what they want to perceive; they read or listen only to such material as confirms or can be misinterpreted to confirm their existing views; they deliberately or unconsciously avoid material that they know runs counter to their present opinions.

It is obvious that if those who now run certain advertising campaigns knew this, they would not be doing what they are doing. They would modify their approach.

Many advertisers believe that merely supplying true information about a product will change the attitudes of those who now have false ideas about it. Ethically and socially, truth is vital. But the social scientists have found that attempts to change attitudes only by disseminating true information or factual arguments have been “notably unrewarding.” This knowledge, too, might change much present-day advertising.

Advertising today concentrates on buying space in different media, preparing copy for this space, and allocating moneys for this purpose. To be successful we must approach the problem as a much more dynamic social process—one in which we use our knowledge of the culture patterns and of individual motivation to engineer the consent of the buyer in terms of his group interest and his individual interest.

In making up his mind about anything, a person is conditioned by not one but many influences—some made up of words alone, others by actions or attitudes of the group of which he is a part. We must plan our advertising campaigns on the principle of these multiple influences.

In a recent statement on program and policy, the Ford Foundation called attention to the failure of business to take advantage of the social sciences. It stressed the need for increasing the use of the sciences of human behavior in business and applying existing knowledge in this field. Theories and techniques now exist, the Foundation pointed out, that promise a more complete understanding of the mainsprings of human action; and the Foundation has selected human conduct as one of its five areas of research.

Advertising needs to apply what the social sciences already know about human nature and conduct. One forward-looking advertiser I know uses an approach others might follow with equal success. Media are not his first, but his last consideration. His primary problem is not “Where shall I advertise and what shall I say?” Rather, it is knowing just what he wants to accomplish, finding out by research what the basic mainsprings of behavior of his public are as individuals and as members of a group. He deals with his problem like a campaign manager who wants the public to elect his candidate

to office. He does not depend on any one speech or any one series of releases. He depends upon his ingenuity and experience in engineering the consent of the voters for his candidate in every possible way. There is this difference, however: this advertiser plans his project as a social scientist would.

Here are three simple ways in which advertising men can proceed:

1. Familiarize themselves with the key texts on the disciplines with which they deal—sociology, psychology, social psychology, anthropology, psychiatry. Any good university or library will provide lists.

2. Follow the current periodical literature in the main fields. Here again the advice of a university or the library will be useful.

3. Join one of the learned societies, such as the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, to keep in close touch with current developments.

Advertisers today rest their case mainly on the alchemy of semantics. They might find it worth while to devote attention to the disciplines of human motivations. Difficult and time-consuming, yes, but basic to the understanding and accomplishment of what they are trying to do.

## ***A Different Kind of Poll—Preview of American Public Opinion***

*MOST POLLS try to project into the future what people think or say they think. In 1944, during the war, I attempted to develop a poll that would analyze what people are likely to think and do about probable major issues in the immediate future. To that extent, it represented an original departure in opinion polls.*

*The results of this survey were published in The American Mercury for March, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Time confirmed the validity of this poll. In working out the poll, I first made up a list of the important groupings that I felt played a part in the final determination of United States policy. I included in this list groups representing all the major cleavages of the United States—farm, labor, industry, ethnic, religious, and so on. I asked the leaders of each group what they felt were the probable major issues and what they would do about them. Then I tried to interpret what they said by evaluating the conflict or adjustment of the various forces in action.*

*This chapter is based on my Mercury article.*

In 1944, while the United States was still fighting World War II, there were widespread fears—voiced in editorials, radio comment, and political speeches—that the American people might be so divided in the immediate future as to threaten the very foundations of our democratic society. The public had these misgivings as it saw strikes, racial clashes, political quarrels, and other seeming evidences of disunity. Nevertheless, on the basis of a careful and new type of opinion survey, I felt justified in asserting that the gloomy prophecies were unjustified. On the evidence gathered, I ventured to forecast that the immediate future would find us a strongly united people.

Opinion polls ordinarily attempt to measure existing attitudes on public questions. By comparing these attitudes with past attitudes, they seek to trace trends in mass opinion and mass preference. The



survey I conducted, however, broke away from this procedure. Geared to opinion on the immediate future, it did not pose specific questions and it did not probe the public as a whole. Instead, it sought to determine (1) what would be likely to emerge as the chief issues of popular interest in the near future and (2) what would be the prevailing view and action on each of these subjects.

That survey, an original attempt to estimate public opinion and action in the next six months or so, indicated clearly that, as a nation, we would agree on what were the main issues facing the country, and be almost unanimous in the determination to solve them along democratic lines.

I based the survey on a principle that I have tested thoroughly in the course of more than twenty-five years in the field of public opinion. Its validity is today generally accepted. I refer to the principle that the opinions held by group leaders in a democratic nation today become the mass opinion tomorrow.

If we can ascertain what those who mold public opinion believe now, we have a reliable preview of what public opinion and action will be later. Obviously, no one group of opinion makers, regardless of how influential it may be, provides an adequate guide to future general public opinion, but a representative sampling of all groups of opinion makers does provide it. Thus where other polls test the attitudes of a cross section of the whole population, I addressed myself only to a cross section of group leaders.

My poll covered an ample segment of all the men and women who shape public thought and action in our country: editors and commentators who reach millions of minds, labor leaders, public officials, educators, publishers, outstanding business executives, writers, economists, physicians, ministers, and heads of organizations of every type. I gave them complete freedom in selecting the issues they believed would be dominant in the next six months, in stating their views on these issues, and in indicating what action they expected to take to make their views prevail among those whom they influenced.

The responses were gratifyingly full and frank. They represented every section of the country and every type of opinion. The survey disclosed what would be the five major issues in the public mind for

the months ahead, and what would be the prevalent public opinion on these issues. The five main issues, in the order of their importance, were:

- (1) winning the war;
- (2) the cost of living;
- (3) international co-operation;
- (4) race relations; and
- (5) labor relations.

Three additional subjects, also in order of their importance, were:

- (1) the 1944 elections;
- (2) the trend of the federal government; and
- (3) demobilization.

It was hardly necessary to elaborate upon the first two issues. Everybody would want the war won as quickly as possible. The people would want to follow the Commander-in-Chief and his aides in whatever they thought best to bring the conflict to a speedy and victorious conclusion. Everybody, naturally, would desire to have the cost of living reduced, with profiteers curbed and punished. But we could expect a divergence of opinion on how the cost of living should be kept down and inflation combated. A large sector of the public would favor wage controls and price controls and would put up with rationing to the limit.

On taxation there would be the usual cleavage of opinion. But even in the field of taxation and finance I felt safe in forecasting unanimity of resolution to make all sacrifices decided upon. An industrial executive from Springfield, Massachusetts, was in effect offering a preview of future opinion when he wrote: "I will subscribe to the war loans to the limit, and pay taxes with as cheerful a grin as I can muster."

As for international co-operation, my survey revealed that in the near future some people would be worried about Communism in America. Many would be critical of Britain's colonial policies and Russia's expansionist aims. The overwhelming majority would, however, be in favor of some international combination of nations for collective security.

The American people in the coming months would also favor free trade, an international bank, an international police force, and a world court. On postwar boundary problems, citizens would insist that the United States play an important role, with a view to avoiding future international conflicts.

In short, on the basis of what molders of opinion believed at that moment, I could predict that Americans in the months ahead would frown on extreme isolationism and would support a greater participation in international affairs. I predicted, as a corollary, that those who counted on a popular swing toward prewar types of isolationism as a result of domestic discontents were deeply mistaken.

As an indication of the pattern of the coming public opinion, I cited a typical statement by a prominent Iowa Republican editor who wrote me: "I will give no aid and comfort to any isolationist trend in my party. The party will be as dead as a dodo if any such attempt is made."

This view was clearly dominant, though there would be a distinct minority view, as evidenced in a comment such as this from a businessman: "If you care for a prediction, next year will be a period of rapid ebb for internationalism in the United States, and a rapidly mounting tide of American nationalism. The reaction to the One World ballyhoo has already set in, and we may look for a return of old-fashioned patriotism."

On the basis of my poll, I predicted that most Americans within six months would favor the middle road between "old-fashioned patriotism" and "all-out internationalism."

Race relations would loom large in the public mind in the immediate future, because it already occupied a prominent place in the thinking of those who shape public opinion, though few permanent solutions would be forthcoming. The prevailing opinion on this issue would be moderate, sympathetic, and democratic. Americans as a whole would demand more economic and political opportunities for the Negro and a genuine amelioration of his status. There would be mounting public antagonism to the Southern poll tax. The people as a whole would be appreciably less concerned with the

Jewish question, though a small percentage would intensify their anti-Jewish talk.

The texture of the emerging opinion could be judged by this typical response by a Middle Western newspaper editor: "More and more efforts on the part of race-conscious folks and Jew-baiters to unload their ills on the Negroes and Jews—blame them for everything. It won't work. This country has a destiny and the undercurrent is for justice and right—we must have it, and the good people are determined to get it for every citizen."

In the domain of labor relations, my poll indicated that many people would ask for legislation calling for greater responsibility of union leadership, the incorporation of unions, quick federal action on strikes in war plants, and the redrafting of the Wagner Act. We had a foretaste of public opinion in the following typical expression by a Washington, D. C., editor: "I hope that resentment among soldiers and civilians against unwise union tactics can be prevented from taking the form of a punitive attack on unorganized labor; believe attitude of labor leaders in resisting moderate efforts to correct union abuses and require greater union responsibility, is contributing more to danger of such an attack than is the attitude of certain employers who hope for a union-busting era after the war."

Another facet of coming opinion on labor was revealed in the typical view of an Indiana labor official discussing labor and postwar re-employment. He warned: "This question should be seriously considered now by the American people. After all wars, when men and women are unemployed, the employing class has nearly always, according to history, taken advantage of the labor market and has, very often, successfully destroyed the living conditions, wages, hours, etc., of the masses of the workers. We should now give serious thought to and make provisions not entirely dependent on the government, that the millions of men and women engaged in the war directly or indirectly, shall have an opportunity to earn a living."

An Ohio radio director voiced the prevailing opinion, which favored amicable adjustment of the differences: "A vast public education campaign is necessary here to remove prejudices between labor and management based on ignorance, and to get areas of agreement out in the open."

On the 1944 election, as was to be expected in a democracy, there were sharp differences of opinion. The big issue would be Roosevelt and the tacit assumption seemed to be that he would run for a fourth term.

Regarding the trend of the federal government, the people in the coming months would almost unanimously demand the strengthening of democratic defenses against attempts, direct and indirect, for centralized control. A Boston newspaper editor expressed a typical future opinion when he called for "more than lip service to our Constitution and Bill of Rights" and pointed to the imperative "need to make these alive and keep them alive for every inhabitant of this land. I forecast that the American people will be solidly behind the principle of free enterprise."

The majority of the people would not insist on the quick demobilization of our troops. This was evident in leader opinions of which the following from a New Jersey editor was representative: "The government should resist the clamor to 'bring the boys home' . . . in order to prosecute the Japanese war intensively, to maintain adequate military and naval garrisons throughout the world, and to make the demobilization of the millions in service very gradual."

The country would probably come out more definitely for universal military training after the war and would insist that former servicemen be assisted in obtaining jobs and be given every educational opportunity to better their lot. They would also favor postwar planning—mostly by state and local government rather than by the federal government.

On all these eight issues, the poll revealed, there would be no marked cleavages in the attitudes of various sections of the country. All sections would regard the five major and three additional subjects in very much the same order of importance. In the Northeastern states, labor relations would occupy an importance almost equal to the cost of living and international co-operation, while in the Southeastern states the trend of the federal government would assume more importance than in the rest of the country. In the North Central states, race relations, particularly the Negro problem, would hold greater interest than elsewhere, as would be the case in the

Pacific Coast states, with the emphasis on the Japanese problem. But these variations would be minor.

The survey disclosed a considerable difference among the professions. Educators, for instance, were most interested in the cost of living, with international co-operation running a close second. Writers and lecturers were more concerned with race relations than with other issues. The same held true for radio commentators and radio program directors. Liberals and labor leaders placed their main emphasis on labor relations and racial problems. Public officials differed little in their thinking from the other groups. To most of them international co-operation and the cost of living appeared to be the most potent issues.

In this survey, however, we were concerned not with what such molders of opinion thought then, but with what the great public, to whom their views would spread, would think in the immediate future. The notable fact that emerged was that, despite variations in emphasis, group leaders were in agreement on what the issues would be and in their general attitude toward them. Most significant of all, they were virtually unanimous that we must use only democratic processes in solving our nation's problems. Less than 1 per cent revealed the slightest inclination to adopt revolutionary means.

All these returns enabled me to predict, for the next six months, a truly united country despite those manifestations of disunity that made headlines. Crackpots, agitators, and panicky individuals spoke only for a small and negligible minority. The silent, deep-running opinion of the preponderant majority would be almost unanimously devoted to winning the war and supporting democratic ways in politics and economics.

## ***Attitude Polls—Servants or Masters?***

THE fall, 1945, issue of the *Public Opinion Quarterly* carried an article, “Attitude Polls—Servants or Masters?” written by me. This article, which evoked considerable comment, was based on the obvious fact that attitude polls had become an important factor on the American scene. While I agreed that polls are an enormously useful implement when honestly, efficiently and intelligently gathered and understood, I warned that they are potentially dangerous weapons in the hands of the unwise, the inept, the dishonest or the antisocial. Inaccurate polls and interpretations, I pointed out, are a danger to our democratic society because (1) they have as strong an influence on the public as accurate polls; (2) the misuse of polls for biased or venal purposes can be extremely harmful; and (3) leaders who misinterpret or distort polls are a menace to society.

Polls, I warned, should be our servants, not our masters, but unfortunately there is too literal an acceptance of the validity of attitude polls. They often lull legislators and businessmen into the belief that they are safe from public disapproval when quantitative percentage corroborates their own point of view. I also warned that there was danger in the new kind of leadership which polls have produced in the United States—leadership of obedience to polls.

To prevent some of the misuse and misinterpretation of attitude and opinion polls, I recommended that (1) pollsters be licensed, just as doctors, lawyers, accountants, and architects are; (2) the public and its leaders should be educated in the significance of polls in our society.

Three years after this article appeared came the 1948 presidential election and Harry S. Truman was returned to the White House in spite of the fact that the majority of opinion polls had been used to predict his certain defeat.

Like vitamins and many other good things, attitude polls have been adopted by America with its customary unthinking enthusiasm

for new things. Polls are very a useful implement when honestly, efficiently, and intelligently gathered and understood. Conversely, they are potentially dangerous weapons in the hands of the unwise, the inept, the dishonest, or the antisocial.

Not all polls are honestly conducted, not all polls are accurately taken, and not all polls are intelligently interpreted. Polls rarely educe future attitudes. Nevertheless, the public scans the figures with devotion and believes that the verdict of the majority has been given for all time on all questions answered in polls. Public and leaders tend to regard attitude polls today as the voice of God and the will of the people. They have a new magic for satisfying the ancient desire to learn tomorrow's lesson from yesterday's page.

Many different kinds of attitude polls claim to photograph the public's point of view on every form of enterprise, private and public, profit and nonprofit. Some ask simple "yes" and "no" questions. Others are broader and check answers through multiple questions. Some polls, scientific and accurate, cross-section the public before questioning starts. Such polls are "quota sampling," "area sampling," and "panel polls." Some bring out superficial attitudes. Others go deeper. Some are made once; others are spaced at intervals over a period.

The discussion here extends only to attitude polls. It does not apply to factual and purely quantitative surveys on markets and other similar measurement studies. Nor does it apply to depth interviews, which are not really polls although some people regard them as such. Depth surveys can indicate future trends. They try to discover the motives of people, try to find out why they think and act as they do. They find out what attitudes are permanent, what words, pictures, and actions fix them, which attitudes can be changed and how.

Too many leaders and too much of the public accept attitude polls with simple faith. They should not do so. The value of polls lies in interpretation as well as in their statistical accuracy. An attitude poll, in itself, conveys no message. Its figures are the raw material. A poll is an index to the future only if the interpreter knows a good deal more than the figures of the poll show in themselves. Millions of



Americans do not know that the poll is a flash of light that reveals only a split-second attitude.

Polls deserve serious consideration by government, pollster, and the public. We need to define the function of polls; to call attention to the dangers to society of inaccuracy, misinterpretation, misuse and distortion; and to show why polls vary as indices of future action of people.

Inaccurate polls and interpretations are a danger to society because:

1. inaccurate polls have as strong an influence on the public as accurate polls;
2. misuse of polls, for biased or venal purposes by pollsters or by those who hire pollsters, can be extremely harmful;
3. leaders who misinterpret and distort polls in dealing with the public are a menace to society.

### *The Basic Danger*

There is too literal an acceptance of the validity of attitude polls. Many people believe that, when a poll shows 51 per cent of the public favoring a proposition, this is the will of the public. This belief by leader and public tends to eliminate traditionally democratic ways of making decisions by accommodation and adjustment of the points of view of majority and minority groups. Formerly, decisions were usually arrived at in the open through discussion and compromise. Today, the poll has muffled dissenting voices. That is a real danger to our democratic way of arriving at conclusions.

Even inaccurate and inept attitude polls influence the public. One case illustrates this point dramatically. The effect of an inaccurate election poll on the fortunes of a defeated political party was summed up by its chairman in a telegram to Governor Dewey. The poll was taken by the *New York Daily News*. The telegram was sent by the Liberal party: "On Oct. 15 the *News* poll erroneously predicted a vote of over 70 per cent for Mr. O'Dwyer. [The actual vote was 57.3 per cent.] From that day on the campaign for good government was over for all practical purposes. Morale sagged, workers disappeared, and revenues stopped."

But such a danger exists not only in the case of the inaccurate polls. It is equally strong in the case of accurate ones. In the Jeffries-

Frankenstein election of 1945, the undue influence of polls was dramatically brought before the public. The Opinion Research Corporation had been hired by a private party under contract to make an attitude poll of the chances of election of the two candidates. The *Detroit Free Press* got hold of the poll and published it. It showed that an overwhelming percentage of the Negroes in Detroit favored Frankenstein, who later charged that the poll adversely affected his election because of this showing.

There are dangers from the use of stacked, false, phony polls for biased or venal purposes. Polls are a temptation to pollsters or to groups which, lacking a sense of social responsibility and knowing the credence the public gives to polls, use them for their own ends.

### *Polls vs. Leaders*

Attitude polls often lull legislators and businessmen into the belief that they are safe from public disapproval when quantitative percentage corroborates their own view. They do not think of public opinion as subject to change without notice, and hence disregard such a possibility. They do not consider the passive or hidden points of view as important. This attitude may lead to explosions later on when minority opinions become articulate, active, and overt and come suddenly into open conflict with majority opinion. Discussions are important in making decisions in the broad public interest.

There is, too, danger in the new kind of leadership that polls have produced in the United States—leadership of obedience to polls. Correct polls must be carefully used for a number of reasons:

1. Attitude polls exercise so strong an influence upon the public as often to discourage use of sound democratic methods of reaching important decisions.
2. Society suffers when polls inhibit leaders from independent thinking, from anticipating change, or from preparing the public for change.
3. Polls exert pressure that may place society under what Jefferson called the tyranny of the majority and throttle progressive minority ideas.

We are no longer led by men. We are led around by the polls. The obligation of democratic leadership, whether in business or politics, is to inform and educate public opinion toward progress and to make decisions on a more careful basis than merely a numerical count.

Attitude polls have become deciding factors in politics, the arts, business, and, in fact, every phase of our life.

A situation such as this leaves the public unprepared for change because the leaders who should do so do not prepare the public for change. We know that attitudes are changed very quickly by planned action or by unplanned events, even though developmental change is usually slow. The people who pin their faith on the permanency of attitudes as shown by polls, believing they are accurate forecasts, are often misled. Social, industrial, and political leaders who follow the polls follow the past instead of advancing to the future. Society suffers.

Because their true value is distorted in the public mind, polls may also destroy progressive action of many kinds by intimidating leaders. They prevent the overcautious from proceeding along progressive lines. Some leaders, so called, examine the figures and obey them. If there is a 70 per cent poll vote in favor of a product, a traffic regulation, a proposed Congressional bill, the poll makes up the leaders' minds. Their reason for bowing to the poll is very simple. Why should they stick their necks out by going against what seems to be majority opinion?

I do not mean that the true leader follows his public. By and large, real leaders in our national life are almost invariably ahead of their followers. But pseudo-leaders, who in most cases actually are followers, are encouraged by the polls to continue as followers.

The present belief that polls show a permanent public opinion helps to maintain the *status quo*. Certainly in a fast-moving world this is a dead weight. Majorities must be stimulated and educated to move ahead. The danger to society in destroying initiative is self-evident.

But while the attitude polls carry these dangers with them, scientifically planned polls, carried out within the limits of presentday knowledge, may be accurate in forecasting actions. They can forecast elections. Five of them, for instance, forecast the outcome of the 1944 presidential race with deviations of less than 2 per cent from the actual popular vote.

*Like an Iceberg . . .*

It is a far cry from polls of this kind to polls collecting public attitudes toward billboard advertising, radio commercials, or child labor. For such polls to have meaning, figures must be studied and interpreted in the light of a broader analysis of public trends, counterdrives, and significant events.

The voice of the people, which pollsters say is expressed in attitude polls, is rarely the unchangeable voice of the people. Public opinion is like an iceberg. The visible portion is the expressed attitudes, but the submerged portion of public opinion is sometimes potentially the more powerful.

The scientific poll is a count of the public's current feelings. When it only attempts to reveal public reaction at the moment when the count is taken, it can be useful. It can serve as a tool of leadership. It may aid in making plans, in attempting to strengthen public attitudes or to change them. Socially-minded leaders try to know what public attitudes are at a given moment. With this knowledge, they can plan to educate the public on the value of new customs and new attitudes or they can help to preserve present ones.

When I referred to leadership, I meant democratic leadership—leadership through democratic methods, through education, through persuasion, not leadership by threat, intimidation, force, or hypocrisy as practiced in authoritarian regimes. In politics, democratic progress is achieved through the interaction of individuals and groups led by individuals toward a common decision. A leader in America can proceed no faster than his followers want to follow him. The true function of attitude polls, then, is to be a tool to help leaders fulfill their democratic function in business or politics. For the public, the poll should be simply a thermometer—it shows the temperature at the moment of taking.

Most attitudes are subject to change through outside pressure. Here, as Dr. Hadley Cantril (of Princeton University's Office of Public Opinion Research) says, we must distinguish between "polls that touch deep-seated, well-crystallized attitudes and those that touch uncrystallized situations—it's the latter that polls, leaders, or any other influence can affect."

To interpret a poll from figures alone is like diagnosing a patient's illness only by reading the thermometer. Even readings taken over a

period of time are ineffective in polls. The figures may remain stable for a while and lead to a wrong interpretation, namely, forecasting by projecting stable attitudes into the future. Actually, the public may be apathetic toward or ignorant of a condition. Tomorrow they may learn new facts that may change their attitude. Public attitudes as shown by polls, although well defined at any given moment, may vary upwards or downwards when words, pictures, and actions are used to change these attitudes. Or the attitudes may be maintained when words, pictures, and actions intensify present attitudes.

When the United States destroyer *Panay* was sunk by the Japanese before the war, negative attitudes toward Japan in the United States moved up sharply overnight. Likewise to cite another example, publicity given to one botulinus death from an olive changed attitudes swiftly from favorable to unfavorable. Again when Sonja Henie wore white leather skating shoes in a motion picture, thousands of girls rushed to buy white skating shoes instead of the traditional black ones.

Authority or factual evidence dramatically presented may modify attitudes. So may effective reasoning or persuasion appealing to tradition or emotion. Pollsters recognize this fact; but, nevertheless, too many people regard attitude polls as if they showed unchangeable attitudes.

### *The Why*

What are some of the psychological reasons why attitude polls vary as indices of future action of the people, why do they not fill the functions that leaders and people think they do, and why do they need to be judiciously interpreted? The psychological factors I am going to discuss are, of course, obvious. I mention them because they indicate how one can get a mass opinion that is not really valid, but nevertheless can exert a powerful influence.

Attitude polls may record only what an individual wants to tell an inquirer or what he thinks the inquirer wants to hear. Often they represent merely a man's conforming to the generally accepted point of view. Unconscious censorship often prevents the interviewee from saying what he really thinks—or may do. A man who says on Monday he isn't prejudiced against Negroes may join a lynching

party on Tuesday. Sometimes answers are bandwagon answers. Sometimes the answer is an attempt to build up the ego or to impress the hearer with the respondent's status. Answers may reflect environmental or other external conditions of the moment.

The way a question is asked, the technique of the individual pollster, affect the validity of an attitude poll. The pollster's bias and point of view have an influence. The personality of the questioner affects the man who is interviewed. The answer depends on the psychosomatic condition of the inquirer as well as of the respondent. Emotions of the moment have a great effect on answers given on the spur of the moment. They slant a quick answer and may lead to direct misstatements. A man who has had a hearty breakfast, a good night's sleep, and looks forward to a pleasant day will answer differently than he would have if he had been out all night, had had a little too much to drink, or was disturbed about a family situation. A man on his way to the doctor may be more pessimistic about taxes than the same man who has just been told by the doctor that his blood pressure is satisfactory. No one felt too good about anything the day after the Nazi invasion of Paris. Such widespread moods don't cancel one another out, and so the law of averages does not always apply.

Our unconscious thought, as well as our conscious reasonings, affects answers. What we answer is sometimes a rationalization. The real reasons may be hidden because we are ashamed of them. They may be frivolous or selfish reasons of which we disapprove.

Many people are neurotic. Their answers may reflect their inner struggle with themselves and may not show their real point of view. For any number of reasons—glandular, psychological, social—we may avoid a considered answer on the spur of the moment. All these factors affect any attitude poll.

Some attitude polls give only a quantitative measurement based on "yes" and "no" answers. These do not show whether a man will change his point of view or not, or why, because they do not show intensity of attitude. The intensity with which an attitude is held indicates the potential of change. That is why so many polls are poor guides to anything but the thought of the moment. That is why the attitudes presented by polls may change tomorrow or the next day.

## *Two Recommendations*

What can be done to prevent some of the misuse, the distortions and misinterpretations of polls? Here are two recommendations. I believe they deserve discussion and action.

1. Licenses should be required for the practice of polling. Every sound practitioner undoubtedly would welcome such a step. The people, as represented by their state or national government, insure themselves against malpractice of any profession fraught with the public interest. This is done in the case of doctors, lawyers, accountants, and architects by setting up standards of character and educational qualifications before an individual is permitted to practice. Self-regulation has been practiced by many professions, and it can be set up in the polling profession. The suggestion has been made that this might be done by a nongovernmental body taking over supervision of pollsters. This is possible, but it is doubtful whether a private organization would have the authority in the public mind that government would to eliminate phony, stacked, venal, dishonest, and inaccurate polls.

2. Educational activities, aimed at public and leaders, must be carried on to acquaint them with the significance of polls in our society. They should be given facts and points of view about polls, so that they can appraise polls correctly and in that way prevent dangers to society. Releases about polls should discuss weighting, if there has been any, and they should give the facts and figures of regional or sectional divisions in order to allow a better understanding of the many constituent groups that enter into majority action.

Polls then will fill the sound democratic purpose of helping make decisions represent the accommodation of many views, rather than a majority opinion overwhelming all other points of view.

## ***Public Relations for Public Education***

*SOCIETY and civilization are possible only because man can think and communicate thought and because he transmits knowledge to his children. No society could possibly exist without some kind of educational system for training the next generation. It is education that gives continuity to communities, nations, and civilizations.*

*One of the obstacles that our educational system faces is in the field of public relations. We cannot have better education until there is better public understanding of our schools.*

*This was the theme of a talk I delivered before five hundred educators and public leaders who attended the Second Annual Conference of School Administrators and Supervisors in April, 1949. This theme is developed in this chapter, which deals with the engineering of the public's consent for a broader and more realistic treatment of our educational system.*

It will help us to master the present acute crisis in public education if we recall the basic role that education plays in the ideal of American democracy. That role was clearly defined by the Founding Fathers of this republic.

Thomas Jefferson said in 1787, "Do not be too severe upon the errors of the people, but reclaim them by enlightening them." Later he added, "Educate and inform the whole mass of people. They are the only reliance for the preservation of liberty." James Madison added to this idea when he said, "A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both." And Abraham Lincoln carried the thought still further when he declared, "I view education as the most important subject we, as a people, can be engaged in."

These utterances embody the essence of our democracy. Our country was founded and built up in the conviction that democracy is possible only when we have an educated body of citizens. This is so clear that the educational objectives formulated by Jefferson,



Madison, and Lincoln are what the enemies of democracy attack first. They are what we must, above all, preserve.

To what extent have these objectives been met, and what is the state of public understanding and action regarding them? In this chapter I shall discuss (1) the activities aimed at furthering better public understanding of our public schools, (2) statistics on the status and needs of the public schools, (3) the acuteness of the current crisis in education, (4) the origin and extent of the current lack of understanding of the educational crisis as revealed by public opinion surveys, (5) recommendations for engineering the consent of the public to a deeper, broader, more realistic treatment of public school education.

Efforts to develop public understanding of education cannot be considered abstractly. Any public relations campaign in this direction must be based on a clear conception of the goal to be attained. Our goal is the development of public recognition of and support for the idea that *public education is the job of the American people as a whole*.

Public education is one function of government. The public school is the basic force in maintaining and advancing our democracy. It welds together the constituent groups of our society at the most impressionable time of the individual's life. It carries forward through the individual our culture and our ideals—freedom, equality, and orderly justice. And in the modern situation of increasing social rigidity, the public school serves as a leavening agent. It is in the public school that the American citizen is formed. Today, more than ever before, we see how right Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln were in basing popular government on the education of the people.

In this turbulent, fateful twentieth century, the national and international decisions the American people make must be made with a knowledge and understanding of the facts. If our people are badly educated, or not educated at all, they are bound to become the victims of pressure and propaganda groups. Unless we have the kind of popular education required by modern conditions, we cannot make the kind of decisions demanded of free men in a democracy like ours.

To what extent do we actually have the necessary popular education? And what effect has our existing education had upon vital national decisions?

In his recent book *The Man in the Street*, Professor T. A. Bailey ascribes our confused policies in foreign affairs to the average American's lack of education. He points out that six out of every ten Americans never go beyond the eighth grade of public school. And the "grader" ranks below high school and college groups in purely factual information. On almost every item of a questionnaire in which respondents were classified by education, the lowest educational bracket appeared as the most narrow, shortsighted, and unenlightened. Most of the "don't know," "no opinion," and "undecided" replies were concentrated in this group—an unpredictable, "explosive" segment of the population. Significantly, the opinions of "graders" were far less liberal than those of high school and college groups.

These are vastly meaningful revelations. Public education is of the utmost importance to every part of our national being. Full support of our public schools by the public is indispensable for our survival in a world of conflicting ideologies. The current crisis in education is not simply one more crisis. It is a gigantic problem that must be solved through public understanding if our nation is to live.

What are the specific inadequacies of our present-day school system that must be overcome?

Not long ago, the *New York Times* listed the following educational needs: (1) greater financial support; (2) greater school allocations by communities, states, and the federal government for increasing teachers' salaries; (3) equal pay for elementary and high school teachers; (4) improvement and increase of urban and rural school buildings; (5) improvement of teacher training through modern methods. School teachers must have greater influence on school administration, professional standards must be raised, and there must be better recruitment of teachers, better tenure rules, and better retirement laws.

In order to achieve these goals, the public must be made to understand what our schools mean to the life of the nation, what they are doing, how they operate and what their place is in the life of the

community and of the individual. It might be assumed that the public is already profoundly interested in education. Isn't it obvious that nothing can be more important than the training of our children? Unfortunately, the public does not feel that way at all. Here are some figures that show where education stands in America today.

In 1948 the American people spent \$8,800,000,000 for liquor. We spent \$4,147,000,000 for tobacco. But in the same year we spent only \$4,053,000,000 for education—only 1.7 per cent of our national income, a considerable drop from the depression year 1932, when we spent more than 5 per cent of our national income on education. Even this is in striking contrast to Russia, which spends 8 per cent of its national income on schools. The picture is even darker when we consider what some of our states spend on education. In 1948, Mississippi spent only \$71.62 for each pupil. Colorado spent \$188.18 a year per pupil, and New York \$256.08.

The situation is appalling when we consider the number of pupils involved in our limited educational budgets. In 1948 there were 23,945,000 pupils in the public schools of the United States. Of these, 18,291,227 were in kindergartens and elementary schools and 4,745,000 in secondary schools. In 1948 all publicly controlled schools were valued at only \$9,200,000,000.

What about the men and women who teach these 23,945,000 children? The number of teachers in 1947–48 was only 907,000. And though the task forced upon these teachers is colossal, they are grossly underpaid. In Mississippi the average salary of public school teachers in 1948 was only \$1,256 a year. The national mean for teachers' salaries was as low as \$2,639 in that same year. These annual earnings are not likely to attract the kind of men and women desperately needed by the teaching profession.

Furthermore, our school buildings are far from adequate. Millions of American children attend classes in obsolete buildings that are potential firetraps. Recently Benjamin Fine, education editor of the *New York Times*, reported that American public schools need 10 billion dollars merely for buildings. His survey revealed a deplorable obsolescence of school buildings that can be overcome only by a ten-year building program in which the states would receive federal aid.

The crisis in education thus comes down in part to a lack of teachers and lack of proper school buildings. To overcome these handicaps, there must be a greater gross expenditure for education. Unless the necessary steps are taken now, the crisis is bound to deepen.

The Bureau of the Census estimates that by April, 1960, there will be an increase of 42 per cent in the number of pupils attending private and public elementary schools; and an increase of 20 per cent in the number of high school pupils. Beginning in 1952–53, the school system as a whole must be prepared to absorb more than 1,000,000 new pupils each year for three years. This means that the school system will need about 25,000 additional teachers each year.

The federal government is aware of this crisis. Only recently Emery M. Foster, head of the Reports and Analysis Branch of the Research and Statistical Service of the Federal Security Agency, called attention to it. "The public," he said, "does not understand the seriousness of the public school situation, not only at the moment but especially in the next twelve years while the successive 'crop of war babies' are being educated. The major problems will be teachers and buildings, and of course increased gross expenditures. All of these problems require long-term planning. . . . Moreover, we are apparently powerless to remedy the situation except to cry a warning from the housetops and hope that something may happen."

Our traditions are all for public school education. But public understanding of its vital importance has not been the dominant force it should be. One reason for this lack of understanding is that the public knows little about the history of American education. We must have a knowledge of the past to build for the future. Education must be considered more fundamentally than as a postwar problem. We must know the *basic* reasons for the present crisis in education. Our building for the future will be inept and difficult if we fail to understand the interaction of social and historical forces that produced the present.

Historical necessity dictated the evolution of our school system. In colonial days there were no public schools. But the groundwork of our system was laid in 1642 when Massachusetts passed a law calling for universal education. Five years later another law

established school districts. Towns of fifty householders were required to provide a teacher, and towns of one hundred householders a Latin grammar school. Though the schools thus established were sectarian, the laws were important in setting standards and a ground base for compulsory support of schools by the community. There was no such movement in the Southern colonies. Here the eighteenth-century English system prevailed. The children of the well-to-do had private tutors; poor children were sent to pauper, apprenticeship, church, and charity schools.

The origins of our present educational system will be better understood when we realize that our federal Constitution does not mention public schools and that none of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were public school graduates. Furthermore, although the Constitution provides for the separation of church and state in government, there was no separation of church and state education until the nineteenth century. And it was not till 1802 that Ohio made the first public-land grant in America for school use.

But the First Amendment to the Constitution had its effect on education. It provides that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion and was intended to exclude the struggle of sects from government. It soon became evident that sectarian struggle ought to be excluded from education. New generations of Americans could be trained for common American goals and purposes only if all the people of the state controlled the schools through their state government.

Like all new ideas, that of universal, secular, state-controlled education had to fight its way to victory. The struggle for and against state-controlled school raged from 1820 to 1860. This battle was waged against a background of rising cities and industries, the growth of modern transportation and communication, the extension of the right to vote, and the development of workers' education. The champions of the public school were democratic leaders, philanthropists, humanitarians, urban residents, people who did not pay taxes, industrial workers, and educational groups. Opponents were the rich, the rural residents, taxpayers, leaders of religious

sects, private-school owners. Opposition was particularly strong in the South.

In the eighteen fifties the public school began to emerge victorious. By this time many influential people recognized the necessity for state-supported public schools and the right of the state to tax for school purposes. In 1852 Massachusetts passed the first law requiring compulsory public school education. The law made mandatory twelve weeks' schooling per year for children eight to fourteen years of age. By 1889 twenty-five states had passed similar laws. Mississippi did not pass a law establishing compulsory education until 1920.

These laws, however, did not necessarily alter public attitudes toward education. Nor were the laws strictly enforced anywhere except in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Many states vitiated the school law by providing that pupils might attend school a minimum number of weeks instead of the full school term. The school system was further weakened by the inadequacy of laws against child labor.

The backwardness of public attitudes toward universal education is indicated by the fact that it was not until 1867 that the first United States Commissioner of Education was appointed. It is only in the past fifty years that as a nation we have realized the broad purposes and the vital importance of the public school for America's welfare, and it is only the most alert Americans who have understood the public school as a great social force.

Why has public understanding of education developed so slowly? E. J. Turner suggests some of the reasons in his classic study, *The Passing of the Frontier*. The pioneers were too much absorbed in the heroic business of clearing a continent to pay much attention to schools. Certainly the fur trader and Indian fighter had little opportunity, time, or need to think about the importance of education. Public education began to come into its own only when the more substantial farmers made improvements on the land, when "men of capital and enterprise" created industries and cities, and when banks established the nation's financial structure.

But our pioneer background is not far behind us. Its indifference to formal education still lingers in our thought-pattern. The public today still fails to understand the importance of education.

Public opinion polls on education sustain this observation. In 1947 the American Institute of Public Opinion took a poll on the question: "What do you think is the most important problem today?" Not a single reply said "Education." That same year the National Opinion Research Center made a survey based on the question: "When you think of the problems facing the United States, which one comes to your mind first?" Only 6 per cent of the people interviewed listed general social problems such as education, health, and social maladjustment.

In July, 1947, a poll was taken on the question: "Would you like to attend classes and take special courses for adults in some school or college?" Of those interviewed, 59 per cent said "No" or "I don't know," and only 41 per cent said "Yes."

These responses reflect public attitudes in regard to education. The chances are that people who do not want education for themselves will not care about the national crisis in education.

The ignorance and apathy of most Americans regarding education is also reflected in prevailing notions about teachers salaries. In 1946 the National Education Association made a survey of public opinion on this subject. Of those interviewed, 33 per cent said teachers' salaries are about right, 2 per cent said the salaries are too high, and 21 per cent had no opinion.

Similarly, a Gallup poll taken in September, 1946, showed that 87 per cent of the people questioned were satisfied with the school their children attended, while only 12 per cent were dissatisfied. In May of that year there was another Gallup poll based on the question: "Do you think there are any states which do not provide a satisfactory education?" Twenty per cent of those questioned said "No," 29 per cent were undecided, and 51 per cent said "Yes."

In 1943 a National Opinion Research Center survey showed that 29 per cent of the people questioned believed that all American public schools had as much money as they needed to do a good job of education, 17 per cent were undecided, and 54 per cent said our schools did not have enough money.

A survey made by the same organization the following year further emphasized the public's lack of understanding regarding education and its vital importance for our national survival. Questioned on what

children ought to be taught, 34 per cent of those interviewed said the most important thing for children is a mastery of the three *R*'s.

Public understanding had not improved by 1948, though we had only recently emerged from the biggest war in history—a war in which an understanding by the people of the basic issues played a key role. A Gallup poll taken that year revealed that the most common complaints about our educational system were not about the factors endangering our school system at its very foundations. Only a minority of those questioned spoke of inadequate and overcrowded school buildings, and the shortage and underpayment of teachers. Most interviewees criticized such factors as lack of discipline and character training, the curriculum, teaching methods, lack of interest in education on the part of the parents, and the excess of extracurricular activities.

In August, 1950, Elmo Roper conducted a nation-wide survey for *Life* magazine, the results of which were published in *Life*'s special issue on United States schools on October 16, 1950. This poll showed that the attitude of the people was generally the same as that shown in the polls made in 1946, 1947, and 1948.

One of the questions asked was: "Taking everything into consideration, would you say you are very satisfied, only fairly well satisfied, or not very satisfied with the public school system in your community?" The replies showed that 33.4 per cent were very satisfied and 38.2 percent were fairly well satisfied. Only 16.8 per cent were not satisfied. the others didn't answer or didn't know.

Asked whether they thought teachers in their communities were underpaid, overpaid, or paid the amount they should receive, 43.9 per cent said underpaid, 1.7 per cent said overpaid, 34.1 per cent said they thought teachers received the right amount, and 20.3 per cent didn't know or didn't answer.

The following question, however, shows how confused the situation is, for the public, in spite of its apathy, had some awareness of the importance of education. Asked to "rank the order of importance to the community of public school teachers, clergymen, public officials, merchants, and lawyers," 31.3 per cent thought teachers were most important, 27.1 per cent clergymen, 19.1 per



cent public officials, 12.8 per cent merchants, and 9.7 per cent lawyers.

How can public understanding of education be developed so that the public will both know the facts and *act upon them*?

Knowledge of the facts alone does not necessarily lead to desired action. The facts about the crisis in education must be integrated with realizable social goals, and they must be acted upon if the crisis is to be resolved. To achieve the necessary action, the consent of the public must be engineered in the desired direction. In a world where thousands of facts compete daily for our attention, we must so focus public attention on the educational crisis as to bring about social change in favor of a better educational system.

In our society, three forces work together to bring about social change: (1) public opinion, (2) the activity of voluntary groups, and (3) the law. Enforceable law depends upon a public opinion which demands that law and is willing to obey it.

As has been pointed out in other connections in this book, public opinion often is not well enough informed to constitute the dynamic force it can be. To inform public opinion about a given issue, it is necessary to endow that issue with high visibility. Public education has a particularly low visibility, and so requires even greater effort in making the public aware of what is involved and what must be done in the current educational crisis. It is only when public opinion is thoroughly informed, aroused, and ready to act that we shall get the laws necessary to lift our school system from its present Slough of Despond.

What we need today are voluntary groups that will educate the public about education and so create the necessary public demand for laws that will save and improve our school system. These voluntary groups should consist not only of men and women professionally engaged in education, but also of community leaders who are earnestly interested in it and are willing to do something about it. Once these two groups inform the public about the importance and the problems of our school system, the public will demand and back laws to safeguard and advance that system.

This is the general line along which we can fight for better education, more and better school buildings, more and better-paid

teachers. To be sure, it would not be simple and easy. There is as much competition in serving the nation as there is in politics or business, and the educational field has its own conflicting views and egos. But these obstacles confront every attempt to improve something, and they can be overcome. The important thing is for groups of educators and laymen to work unrelentingly for an informed public opinion that will demand action to solve the crisis.

The best results will be achieved if lay and professional groups carry on their educational campaign with the most complete cooperation and in a centralized way. Professional and lay groups will have to work at every level of education—from kindergarten to college—and at every level of geographic distribution—national, state, community, and neighborhood. For this complex work to be effective, it must be democratically co-ordinated.

Since free competition of ideas in the market place is basic to our democracy many groups have found that a unified front is essential if they are to be heard above the competitive din. Intelligent, co-ordinated planning, even on a minimum of points agreed upon, produces quicker, more effective results.

The areas of agreement among the groups engaged in this campaign should be as broad as possible and should create a unified front that could attack the problem vigorously and effectively. Of course, a “unified” front does not necessarily mean a single national organization of all the groups interested in more and better public schools. Such an organization would be ideal, but difficult to achieve. It would be easier for public school educators and civic-minded citizens to work out a unified front within their state, city, community, or neighborhood. Such a unified front would be the first vital step in creating the necessary public understanding of the problems and actions involved.

The men and women connected with public school education are already organized on many levels. They have national, regional, state, and local associations, professional and lay. Teachers have guilds and unions of various complexions. And the lay groups are diversified too, ranging from parent-teacher associations to do-good societies of various degrees of effectiveness. All these groups have

their value. Their existence assures a higher visibility for educational needs than would exist without them.

Nevertheless, the multiplicity of voices crying out on behalf of education sounds more like a meaningless Babel than a concerted effort to speed up the social change that is imperative if our schools are to be improved. The inadequacies, the necessities and realities of the situation remain.

It is imperative that all the groups working for better education speak with one voice, each group at the same time retaining its own freedom and responsibility to work on its own level. Such a unification of effort would minimize the duplication and distortion that are bound to confuse, instead of enlightening, the public. Our generation has experienced the supreme test of the effectiveness of democratic centralization of effort. In both world wars, the Allies found that only the appointment of a supreme commander of all the armies could speed up and assure final victory. So, too, the USO, the National War Fund, and other great voluntary wartime organizations found this principle extremely effective.

The field of education requires a similar approach today. We would go a long way toward solving the crisis in education if we set up a central board of strategy that would set policy and goals at all levels. Once there is agreement on common goals, and a coordination of group effort, there will still remain certain basic factors necessary for developing public understanding of education.

Every group involved in the campaign must be clear about its objectives. Through thorough research, an accurate inventory of our schools must be made, to give us a complete picture of what is needed in physical equipment and teaching personnel. We must also do the research necessary to get an accurate picture of public attitudes toward public school education. Here we must find out specifically why the public does not grasp the significance of the broader developments of educational theory and practice, what the potentials of the public are for overcoming this deficiency, and how it can be rectified.

This research must answer a number of key questions. What are the areas of distortion, apathy, misunderstanding, and ignorance about public school education and its functions in a democracy?

Who and where are the enemies, hidden and overt, of public school education, and what are they saying and doing against it? In the light of limitations in time, man power and mechanics, what shall be our objectives in reorienting the public? What organizations, plans, and tactics should be utilized in this campaign of educating the public about education?

Research can do more than find out what the public thinks. It can and must also find out what is wrong with the objectives and activities of an institution; what has caused ill-will, misunderstanding, or indifference toward public school education; what necessary things have been left undone; what gains and losses have been made by the public school system.

Another thing that we must establish by research is the aggregate of publics we must take into consideration, how these publics function and why. In this case, the publics we have to deal with include the board of education, the parents and relatives of school children, and taxpayers who have no direct relation to the school system.

In the light of such fundamental research, the objectives of the campaign may have to be reoriented.

The next step is a clear-cut plan of operational organization. An effective campaign to improve our schools requires hard work. This means man power, money, time, and organization.

It is the organization that must decide upon the themes, the strategy, and the tactics of the campaign to bring about better public understanding of education. Strategy and tactics concentrate on bringing about high visibility for the crisis in education. Specific actions must be initiated to engineer public consent in relation to this issue. Appeals must be geared to every motivation of the individuals and groups involved, and must employ factual evidence, emotion, reason and tradition. The activities of the campaign must be continuous, in order that as many as possible may come to identify themselves with the issue. And it must be remembered all along the line that planned events are more powerful than words.

The activities of the campaign must be both informational and organizational. They should include efforts to secure well-rounded co-operation of schools with the community. This will go along way

toward bringing about a better public understanding of the problem. There are many things a school can do in this direction. School buildings can be offered for public meetings, for adult education, for consumer training, and for recreational purposes. Above all, schools can run open forums where they can explain themselves to the community.

Apart from this direct use of the school in our educational campaign, schools can also influence the public through such media as the newspapers, the radio, television, posters, pamphlets, and motion pictures. These are very effective ways of focusing the public's attention on an issue.

Another important tactic is a more effective co-operation between schools and parents. Perhaps personal letters would do more good than report cards. Schools might have more visiting days, and more teacher-parent meetings, which would strengthen the identification of the community with the school.

In addition to specific relationships between the school and the community, a great deal would be gained if teachers would co-operate directly with the community. Teachers can assume leadership in the social services and other community activities. They can also be spokesmen for education in chambers of commerce, American Legion posts, service clubs, and similar civic groups. Through personal contact with individuals and groups they can encourage discussion of vital educational issues. By activities of this kind they can greatly increase the public's understanding of public education.

As for the professional organizations of men and women in the school system, their activities ought to have two main objectives. They can co-operate with lay organizations in carrying out well-integrated programs designed to educate the public and to obtain laws that will further the interests of the school system. And they can increase understanding by their own membership of the issues involved in the current educational crisis.

Only co-ordinated effort will help us overcome the present chaos in our educational system. And we must act quickly, for that chaos is very dangerous to our children and to our future, a deadly menace to

the generations to come, the level of whose intelligence and character will determine the character of the America of the future.

## ***Public Relations for Higher Education***

*THE continued success of our democratic society depends, among other things, not only on our elementary and high schools, but also on our colleges and universities.*

*College and university presidents in the eastern part of the country revealed, in a survey I made, that they are aware of the importance of public relations in this field. This chapter gives the findings of that survey, based upon an analysis of letters received, as presented to a conference of District II, American College Public Relations Association, and suggests ways in which institutions of higher learning might advance their public relations in the national interest and in their own interest.*

The submerged problems of higher education are gradually becoming visible to the public. In an America that is rapidly changing socially, politically, and economically, the future of higher education depends more and more on public understanding of its problems. One of the peculiarities of our civilization is that laymen frequently direct the work of experts. In educational public relations the college and university presidents, the faculty, and the alumni are the laymen; the public relations directors are the experts. This situation has its disadvantages. It is, therefore, extremely important that laymen and experts understand each other and work together toward common goals. To do so, it must first be discovered what those at administrative levels think public relations is and what it should do. Then whether their definitions and appraisals agree with those of the public relations experts can be determined.

Now, as was pointed out earlier in this volume, the phrase "public relations" has been used very loosely since its first application more than twenty-five years ago. It is now a sort of portmanteau expression; like such words as "progressive" and "liberal," it takes on coloration from external situations. However, public relations involves every action or attitude of an institution toward the publics on which it

depends. An institution's good public relations, therefore, are based on actions that reflect the broadest public interest.

Top levels of administration necessarily direct and supervise public relations because that is where the policies that determine those activities are decided. Because of his special skills, aptitudes, and experience, a director of public relations is needed at administrative levels to help carry out the technical phases of the public relations program in business and nonprofit groups alike. He is needed to interpret the entire institution to all its publics on and off the campus.

Now let us appraise the extent to which our definition of public relations procedure is understood and followed by institutions of higher learning. Presidents of many institutions in the East, were asked, by letter, what they thought the scope and function of their public relations activities were, what they conceived their objectives to be, and other related questions.

Although the letters arrived during the holiday season, we received in response a total of more than fifty thousand words from college presidents or their associates. Our analysis was based on forty of these letters, many of them from the most important institutions of the eastern United States.

Almost all the executives acknowledged the importance and value of public relations. As President Carter Davidson of Union College wrote, "If a chief administrative officer fails in a college, it is largely due to the failure of his college public relations program." In the alumni public relations committee report sent to us by President Harold W. Dodds of Princeton University, this point of view was reinforced: "Public relations is concerned with, first, what an institution *is*, and second, what people *think* it is. It begins, therefore, with the top management of any enterprise."

However, there was a wide variation in the definitions of public relations we received and, therefore, in what the writer conceived to be its use. The replies can be grouped into four clearly defined approaches: First, a very small group, but an important one, agreed with our general definition that public relations embraces the entire relationship of higher education to the public. A second group, somewhat larger, saw public relations as a means of asserting intellectual leadership in the community. A third group, still larger,



thought of public relations in terms of special activities that interpret the institution to the public in order to enhance its prestige and reputation. A fourth—the largest group of all—regarded public relations as a tool of persuasion and suggestion to accomplish certain specific objectives such as fund raising, securing better students or faculty, and other immediate aims.

The late President Edmund Ezra Day of Cornell summed up the general point of view of those who think of public relations as covering the whole impact of the institution on the public: “The very existence of a college or a university involves public relations. Furthermore, the success of the college and whatever it hopes to do is determined, to a very great extent, by its public relations.” Dr. Frank D. Fackenthal, then acting president of Columbia University, echoed his statement: “The scope of college public relations is as broad as the activities of the college or university itself.”

Another administrator, Chancellor William P. Tolley of Syracuse University put it in a slightly different way: “. . . Public relations [is] the total impact the college makes on . . . the specialized ‘publics’ it seeks to serve. . . . [It is not an] information bureau.” And Vice-Chancellor Harold O. Voorhis of New York University said: “The scope of college public relations activities should be as broad as the outermost reaches of the institution.”

President Thomas Brown Rudd of Hamilton College, in his answer, placed responsibility where it belongs: “We must . . . be constantly dealing effectively with the real current problems of our time. . . . I assume that public opinions are developed primarily from significant and noteworthy actions. Since significant and noteworthy actions are necessarily taken by all with the approval of the president, the faculty, trustees and some alumni groups, public relations is unavoidably the function of the president and these groups.”

The second group of college presidents saw in public relations the means to assert intellectual leadership in the community. One university official, Dr. George W. McClelland, then president of the University of Pennsylvania, said: “The function of public relations activities is to . . . improve the opportunities of the university to serve the public by advancing higher education. . . . The preservation of American democracy is inextricably woven into the strengthening of

our endowed institutions.” Another, President Richard L. Greene of Wells College, said that an important function of public relations is to keep the publics of the college informed “of its continuing importance in modern society.” In the same vein, Dr. Bryn J. Hovde, then president of the New School for Social Research, stated that it must “maintain in the public mind the high regard for education as a process without which democracy can hardly be expected to operate successfully.”

The third group of my respondents regarded public relations as a special activity of the college for interpreting it to the public. This view was succinctly worded by Dean Margaret T. Corwin of the New Jersey College for Women as follows: “Public relations activities of a college or university should be the institution’s interpreting agent to the public.”

Another college president, Dr. Harold Taylor of Sarah Lawrence, put it in a slightly different way: “The scope and function of college public relations is to deal accurately and honestly with the educational program which each college is carrying on and to make available to parents, students, and the general public a simple account of what the institution is doing to fulfill its responsibilities. I think that if the institution is not clear about what its responsibilities are, or is not doing anything about them, there is no point in doing any public relating.”

President Herbert L. Spencer of Bucknell University commented in practically the same way, saying: “The public relations activities of any college should aim to interpret the college’s policy and accomplishments to its various publics, in order to secure for the college maximum good will and understanding.” Similarly, Dr. Harry N. Wright, president of the City College of New York, wrote that public relations is the effort “to interpret to the public accurately and constructively the activities and program of the institution.”

This concept was echoed by President John W. Nason, of Swarthmore College, who found it increasingly important to “interpret the nature and purpose of the college to its alumni and friends.” The acting president of Clarkson College of Technology, Dr. J. H. Davis, expressed it in these terms: “The scope and function of college

public relations activities is to improve the prestige of the college and enhance its reputation.”

The fourth group viewed public relations as a tool to achieve specific goals. Professor Ralph G. Unger of the New York State College of Forestry gave it as his opinion that “public relations is public information and education with the objective of keeping the people . . . informed.” Brother B. Thomas, president of Manhattan College, had this to say about public relations: “. . . The purpose [of college public relations activities] may legitimately be improving its own facilities, to be of greater service to the present and future student body.”

From Dr. Herbert D. Welte, president of the Teachers College of Connecticut, came this observation: “The objectives of a college public relations program in a state-supported institution may briefly be stated as follows: (a) to acquaint the public with the activities and needs of the college, (b) to interest students, faculty, and alumni in the program and offerings of the college, and (c) to interest prospective students in enrolling in the college.”

Many specific public relations goals were set up by this last group—raising funds, attracting better students, drawing a better faculty, preserving college independence, acquainting industries and professions with the abilities of the college’s graduates, interesting students, faculty, and alumni in college programs, offering wide-scale intelligence and aptitude programs, and selling the idea of freedom in research and discussion. This group suggested the use of various media to carry their messages, among them catalogs, bulletins, direct mail, radio, and the like.

In this connection mention was made of the many publics to be reached. For instance, the publics of one university were noted by Father Robert I. Gannon, then president of Fordham University, as follows:

1. Faculty and Staff
2. Returned Veterans
3. Other Students
4. Parents of Students
5. Alumni and Alumnae
6. Telephone Callers

7. Campus Visitors
8. Donors and Prospective Donors
9. Secondary School Officials
10. Prospective Students
11. Other Universities, Educational Associations, and Cultural Clubs
12. Prospective Employers
13. Press and Radio
14. Professional Groups
15. Government—Local, State, and National
16. Other Nations

It is interesting to note that very little was said about the public relations man. Among those who did mention him, one president, Dr. Alan Valentine of the University of Rochester, said: "College publicity is a highly specialized job, demanding talents, understandings, sympathies, and personalities of a nature often quite different from those which would make a man a success in public relations for some large industrial concern."

That concept was rather generally expressed, along with the feeling that the public relations director must have direct access to, and work closely with, the president of the college. Another idea, which recurred throughout many letters, was that the entire college family—faculty, students, employees, and others—should all be utilized as an ex-officio public relations staff. This summation gives a fair digest of what our survey revealed.

What conclusions can we draw from this study? Certainly one basic fact brought out by the study was the lack of understanding of just what public relations is and can do for higher education. This fact should be a matter of direct concern to our institutions of higher learning. Because of it, neither public relations nor public relations men themselves were employed effectively. In general, college public relations was used as a tool of persuasion on a limited-approach basis, rather than as an over-all activity correlating all the aims of an institution with all of its publics.

Actually, public relations, as we noted before, covers all four of the functions cited by our respondents. If we accept this concept, public relations was being used on too narrow a basis, very often only to

perpetuate the individual interests of an existing institution rather than to work for the broader purpose of advancing the interests of higher education. Since higher education depends fundamentally on public approval, it must have been losing in its competitive struggle for survival if it failed to utilize the full powers of public relations.

On the basis of this survey, I made the following recommendations:

Administrators of colleges and universities should get together in a conference to agree on a definition of public relations in its broadest terms. They should plot out general areas of agreement on the goals of higher education, and then develop means of joint action. Educational objectives have been defined in the Harvard University report<sup>1</sup> and also by the President's Commission on Higher Education.<sup>2</sup> What is needed at the present time is a concerted effort by universities to reach these goals, both intramural and extramural.

Individually, universities should define clear-cut goals for themselves and put them in writing. Obviously, however, these goals must be adaptable to changing conditions. The public relations man and all the publics of the university—the faculty, the alumni, the town—can use them as a guide for attitudes and actions.

University associations and individual institutions should undertake research to scientifically appraise public understanding of their goals. Further, universities and colleges may have to revise some of their attitudes and actions so as to reach their desired goals.

Certainly the report of the President's Commission on Higher Education indicates a cultural time-lag between the needs of the public and what higher education has provided in certain areas. That report, prepared by disinterested lay and educational experts, called for a carefully developed program to bring higher education fully into the democratic tradition by eliminating economic, geographical, racial, and religious barriers. It called for the improvement of education qualitatively and its expansion quantitatively on both graduate and undergraduate levels if it is to merit the public's support. As a technician dealing in the trends of public thought and action, I believe the President's Commission correctly interpreted the present and future demands of the American public.

It is my belief that a good deal of thought should be given to analyzing the public relations goals of our colleges and universities. Objectives should be so graphically defined that all activities would lead directly toward those ends. The goal may be thought of loosely as prestige. But it must be kept in mind what this prestige will accomplish for the purposes of higher education.

And what are the purposes of higher education—to give service, to acquire a reputation, to interpret, to conduct research? Service to whom? Reputation for what? Interpretation to what end? What kind of research? Are education's goals the search for truth, for intellectual enlightenment in definite areas, or a combination of these elements.

Once institutions of higher learning have, as a group and as individual units, determined their goals, it seems to me that every other action involving public relationships will flow naturally and logically therefrom. The public relations strategy of higher education, its themes, its organization, its planning, timing, and tactics will be more realistic, and it will be able to achieve those goals much more effectively.

An approach of this kind to the problem of integrating the university's relations with its various publics considers both the general and the specific situation in which higher education finds itself. It should enable educational institutions not only to carry on successfully, but to forge ahead boldly and assert the intelligent leadership that is so necessary to our democracy today and in the future.

## ***The Importance of Public Opinion in Economic Mobilization***

*AS this is being written, we are involved in a world-wide clash of ideas. What the United States stands for needs to be made more meaningful to the people of this country and to the peoples outside this country—our friends, those on the fence, and the captive publics behind the Iron Curtain. The strategy, themes, and tactics used in psychological warfare are vital to our survival as a nation.*

*Ever since World War I, I have been interested in problems of national morale and psychological warfare and have written and lectured on the subject extensively. As far back as 1928, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, I advocated in my book *Propaganda* that the United States government create a secretary of public relations as a member of the President's Cabinet. I said that the function of this official should be "correctly to interpret America's aims and ideals throughout the world, and to keep the citizens of this country in touch with governmental activities and the reasons which prompt them. He would, in short, interpret the people to the government and the government to the people. Such an official would be neither a propagandist nor a press agent in the ordinary understanding of those terms. He would be, rather, a trained technician who would be helpful in analyzing public thought and public trends in order to keep the government informed about the public, and the people informed about the government."*

*Again, in 1935, in the November issue of *Current Controversy*, I stressed this point: "The safeguarding of democracy in America today and for the future demands that there be in the Cabinet of the United States a Secretary of Public Relations whose duty it would be to serve the American people as a liaison officer between them and their government. The proposal is made to meet the need of the American people for some unbiased channel through which the President of the United States would learn of the changing wishes of the people, and of the actual effect of his government policies. . . . In*

*this way, there would be in the cabinet, serving the public interest, a responsible executive officer to interpret the people to the Administration, and the Administration to the great mass of the people.”*

*Subsequently I discussed in the September–October, 1940, issue of the Infantry Journal the importance of modern propaganda techniques in psychological warfare today. And in the May, 1941, issue of the Infantry Journal I emphasized that in modern warfare psychological ramparts are as important as physical ramparts. Our morale, I suggested, is our true first line of defense. National unity and morale must come from all sources; it cannot be imposed from any central authority or control. The army can help build morale by (1) exerting itself to make democracy work better by promoting democratic standards both in its own inner workings and in its relations with civilians; (2) leaders in the army can help make democracy work better by publicly expressing favor of those causes that make for a more closely knit democracy.*

*Three years after World War II, on June 14, 1948, I addressed the Industrial College of the Armed Forces on the mobilization of public opinion, surveying and analyzing the media and techniques for mobilizing public opinion in a national emergency. I suggested the following action program:*

- 1. A central organization for mobilizing public opinion, manned by personnel skilled in the techniques of mass communication, and headed by a director appointed by the President. This director should be an expert in the field of communications and should function with a committee of Cabinet officers.*

- 2. Sufficient authority should be vested in the director to enable him to avoid duplication and even competition in the spheres of policy, strategy, and methods.*

- 3. The director would naturally co-ordinate his public relations strategy and methods with those of the armed forces and of all civilian government agencies.*

*The general structure of the proposed organization would follow that of the Committee on Public Information in World War I and the Office of War Information in World War II, but with this difference—that the organization would not be regarded by government leaders*



*as a nuisance, but as a vital part of our defense, and that it would receive the support and expert guidance that it requires.*

*On November 19, 1948, I addressed the Industrial College of the Armed Forces again, this time on public information and the government. Here I tried to outline a “public relations or information and morale program . . . as a way of insuring that when and if a war emergency arises in the United States, the people will be as well prepared in morale as the armed forces are in man power and basic matériel.”*

*When I spoke before the Industrial College again on October 11, 1949, the United States was on the road toward economic and military mobilization.*

*With actual armed conflict in Korea joined and the Great Debate raging here at home over ways and means of preventing a third world war—or fighting one if necessary—the question of psychological warfare became one of nation-wide concern.*

*It is against this background that this chapter should be read.*

Once more the United States, facing a world crisis, has dedicated itself to rearmament and economic mobilization. Again men are being inducted into the armed forces and the federal government is stockpiling strategic and critical materials. Against the background of the national emergency, public good will toward our armed forces is today much greater than at any time since the end of World War II.

Despite this important shift in the attitude of the public, however, many people are still unaware how vital a part public opinion plays in rearmament, economic mobilization, and national defense. And civilians are not the only ones guilty of this dangerous underestimation of the importance of public opinion. Many officers in the armed forces suffer from this error, too. Perhaps that is natural. Men trained in the armed forces live by authority and respect it. And rightly so. Without authority there can be no effective military organization. But public opinion in a democracy like ours is something else again. Here authority cannot and does not play the deciding role.

Public opinion is made up of individual opinions. It is free and subject to change. In our country, where traditions of freedom and

equality prevail, public opinion cannot be mobilized in the same way as men, money, and materials. When a national emergency arises, government cannot take over public opinion and dictate to it, as totalitarian governments can. For industrial and military mobilization to be effective in the United States, we must have the voluntary support of public opinion. Coerced public opinion would be a drastic deviation from the democratic basis of our national life. It would mean the destruction of the very way of life we are fighting to preserve. It would negate our democratic goals and be a step toward totalitarianism.

The fact that our public opinion is free helps to make it strong. Men who make up their own minds are stronger and more self-reliant than men whose opinions are forced upon them. It was failure to realize the might of American public opinion that led aggressors in both world wars and in Korea to risk war with us—and to go down twice already in defeat and to be on the road again for the third time. An aggressor who recognizes our public opinion as a strong united force which backs our national aims, in peace and war, will not be eager to attack.

There is no bigger mistake than to regard the United States as weakest in what actually is our most powerful latent resource—public opinion. In one volume of his World War II memoirs, *The Hinge of Fate*, Winston Churchill said, “It is easier to infuriate Americans than to cow them.” The truth is that public opinion is our greatest asset, and no plan for mobilizing our economic and military resources can afford to ignore it.

We need to face one basic fact of twentieth-century history—the development of humanics. Certainly the dictatorships have faced it and exploited it. Taking advantage of this new knowledge about man and society, they have developed techniques of psychological warfare and the strategy of terror. They have implemented with modern means the Roman slogan “*Divide and conquer!*” Often—and in many countries—they have so dealt with public opinion that they have been able to attain their wicked ends without firing a shot.

It is time the democracies learned to use this new knowledge for good, constructive, democratic ends. Because national action in a democracy depends on public opinion, we must develop a new

approach to economic and military mobilization and to the conduct of war. Doing so will require expert knowledge of social and individual behavior as well as expert knowledge of communication, of the methods of conveying meaning to the public.

Today, the federal government and the armed forces are giving serious attention to this vital matter. They no longer believe that material things are everything and that public opinion can be handled casually through handouts and headlines that glamorize this or that general, this or that policy, in the public mind.

How do these new considerations apply to economic mobilization? The dictionary defines mobilization as “the act of mobilizing or rendering movable; act of assembling, equipping, and preparing military and naval forces for active hostilities; hence, figuratively, the assembly and making ready of various things, as resources, for use.” This definition is good as far as it goes, but it is out of date. It speaks only of things and ignores—except, perhaps, by implication—the resources of the human mind, of public opinion. Two world wars and the Korean conflict have taught us that war in this century is not wholly physical, if it ever was. For waging war we need men, money, and material. But we also need something else equally important—the united will of the people, the wholehearted support of public opinion. This human resource is as important as our technological resources.

Mobilization must be divided into two major areas of action. One is the mobilization of men, money, and material for the creation of physical armies and resources in case of war. Right now a plan for this purpose exists. Steps are being taken for the transformation of our peacetime economy into a wartime economy should the need arise. On the basis of this blueprint, we earmark money, material, and men for military purposes, and stockpile munitions, warehouses, and training camps.

The second form of mobilization is ideological. What can we do here and now to insure that public opinion, without which none of these efforts can fully succeed, will be geared to economic mobilization? Is it possible to stockpile public opinion, too? And if so, how can we stockpile it?

I believe we can stockpile public opinion just as well as we can stockpile things if we go at it the right way and on a planned basis. This stockpiling of public opinion is a long-range, continuing process that must be carried on by all good Americans in and out of government. We must realize at the outset, as I have stressed throughout this book, that the molding of public opinion cannot depend on words alone. It depends on deed as well. The building of public opinion for economic mobilization must be based on facts, on truth, on the justice of our cause, on an understanding by the people of the danger our country faces, and on the faith of the people in one another. It must also be backed by the realities of a good life within the United States.

Americans, like all other people, want psychological and economic security. Efforts to give them this should, if they are successful, produce a vast reserve of favorable public opinion. We can thus stockpile public opinion for times of need by justifying, in reality, the belief of all people in themselves and in their system of society. Faith in the present and the future is the soundest kind of security Americans can have. Unity and strength of attitude and action of the people in time of emergency depends upon this approach. A people worried about security, concerned with status, divided among themselves, cannot be depended upon in a crisis.

A continuing activity aimed at bringing about this national unity and devotion to country is basic in building a strong, supporting public opinion. It would, in addition, provide insurance for maintaining morale in peace and war against enemy propaganda from within and outside our borders. Devoting their attitudes and actions to making democracy work might well become an indispensable function of all individuals and groups in and out of government.

What the people want and expect of the American way of life is already being taken into account in various activities of business and government. Building national morale requires a further extension of this program.

Economic security could be extended to cover loss from illness, disease, old age, death, depression, unemployment, and the loss of earning power. Plans should be made for stabilizing employment, for pensions, health and safety programs, hospitalization, accident

insurance, maternity care, and paid vacations. There should also be thrift and retirement plans, with necessary flexibility to meet changing price levels.

Psychological security could be increased by developing uniform programs for the treatment of employees and executives and by avoiding discrimination because of race, creed, or color. Good working conditions, collective bargaining, and opportunities for job-training, education, and advancement can give people a feeling of self-respect and status.

This long-range approach would promote high national morale by improving the mental and physical health and the economic security and the education of the American people, and by eliminating disabilities of many kinds. The realization of democracy, the translation of our principles into deeds, is the soundest method of public opinion building for economic mobilization. I can think of none more powerful than this.

And now, the second approach, the ideological mobilization to take place only when a fighting war has started.

Here, we would present significant word and picture symbols to our people through a central government-controlled bureau. Such a bureau would use the methods practiced successfully in two world wars to mobilize public opinion. The bureau would have the difficult three-pronged task of counteracting the psychological warfare of our enemies from within and without and of building a high morale among our own people. At the same time, it would have to maintain the democratic standard of truth in information and persuasion.

Of course, such a government bureau cannot be established or maintained in peacetime. The fundamental nature of American democracy requires the free exchange and competition of ideas in the free market place. This freedom is what generates the personal and social power of the individuals who make up our nation. By its very nature, a government-controlled central bureau of information and education is abhorrent to democratic thought and action because it conflicts with our basic creed of freedom of ideas. It also runs contrary to the thinking of the people who own and operate the great media of communication.

Nevertheless, the benefits of such a government bureau in wartime must be recognized. Also, our experience in World War I with the United States Committee on Public Information demonstrated that such an organization can be democratically employed for democratic purposes. I think there would be little disagreement on this point. What we now have to realize is that multiple command of so gigantic an operation in wartime would be as dangerous as multiple command of the armed forces. At the same time, we must realize that its activities could not be entrusted to improvisation by amateurs and dilettantes. This field requires the skill and experience of experts.

The bureau could not rely solely on words and pictures to educate public opinion for the necessary national morale. What the public wants today is concrete evidence and overt action that will validate in actuality the words aimed at informing and persuading it. News of military victory, of course, always stimulates soldiers and civilians. But such news is not always available, and its effect is temporary. Other deeds and symbols must supplement it in order to maintain a continuous effect upon the public.

One basic way to build a strong public opinion in wartime for economic mobilization is to set goals for the war effort and to tell the people what these goals are. President Wilson's Fourteen Points were an effective statement of war aims in the first global conflict. So, too, the Four Freedoms helped to dramatize the aims and ideals of the United States in World War II.

As far as war aims are concerned, the soundest way to build public opinion is to guarantee that the things we fight for will outlast the war and bring the people permanent benefits in peacetime. The vast majority of Americans want an expanding freedom that will give them economic, educational, and social opportunities and full civil rights. Both Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt labored in that general direction. But our aims must be even more realistic than theirs.

From an organizational standpoint, any attempt to function effectively in the field of building public opinion must be based on a thorough, objective analysis of the facts. This requires prior research. As I have pointed out in other connections, before we

proceed to act, we must know the correct answers to certain fundamental questions. At whom are we aiming our activities? What media of communication can most effectively convey our ideas? What ideas make the greatest impact on the public? Which are the most important groups that must be reached? Who are their leaders? How are these groups and leaders affected by actions, words, and pictures? What kinds of organizations are best fitted to carry on certain kinds of work?

To act with the utmost effectiveness in time of national emergency, we must conduct the necessary research in time of peace. Knowing how to deal with dissension, apathy, ignorance, and prejudice among people is as important for the mobilization of public opinion as a thorough knowledge of industrial capacity is for economic mobilization. Our public opinion blueprint must also be based on an interpretation of the fundamental facts. From it stem the methods and tactics of our work.

The United States is made up of all kinds of groups and all kinds of people with many different allegiances, of many ethnic stocks, and with many competing interests. In 1940, for example, 29 per cent of our population was composed of foreign-born Americans or native Americans born of foreign or mixed parentage. Our native-born are 71 per cent of the population, most of them with foreign backgrounds.

One of the things that complicates our problem of mobilizing public opinion for the wholehearted support of the national effort in an emergency is that American Negroes, who constitute 10 per cent of our population, as well as Americans of Indian, Oriental, and Latin-American background, Catholics in some places and Jews in most, suffer from various discriminations. In the face of such daily economic and social discrimination, it is difficult for these Americans to accept the apparent paradox that "all men are created equal."

Research also reveals that our nation is stratified along various educational levels. In 1940, for example, the average adult over twenty-one had spent less than nine years in school. Nearly three million of our fellow citizens of fourteen years of age or more are completely illiterate. Only 14 per cent of our adults have been graduated from high school. The mental age of the public is not very

high, either. About 58 per cent of our population has an intelligence quotient of 95 to 105. Only 21 per cent are above that level, while 21 per cent are below it.

However, this public can be reached via a tremendous network of communication, as listed previously. That huge communication network makes America one room—if we know how to speak to it. The themes we use in addressing the public must be based on the thoroughgoing research referred to above. The American people are deeply loyal to certain basic beliefs, such as liberty, freedom, justice, equality, and our economic system. These must provide the rallying points for our activities in appealing to public opinion.

The science of semantics is also very useful in this field. Words are short cuts to human understanding, though they must be effectively utilized to carry weight and significance. Nor can it ever be too much stressed that words are effective only when they are backed by deeds.

Now, a word of warning. In the kind of world we live in today, we must face the fact that a central government bureau of information would run the risk in wartime of curtailing our liberties. There is always the danger that a centralized power of public censorship will cover up mistakes in the name of preserving military secrets. These activities may lead to antidemocratic action of one sort or another. We must guard against this situation zealously. But we must also realize that unco-ordinated, decentralized activity in the matter of public opinion is the greater of the two dangers. This can bring about disruption, disunity, and a breakdown of morale.

That is one more reason why the mobilization of public opinion cannot be left to amateurs, however well-meaning. Only experts in the field, and men who are at the same time deeply rooted in our democratic tradition, can give us the organization and techniques that will educate and mobilize the public for a national emergency, while still maintaining our democratic pattern.



## ***Public Relations and Anglo-American Co-operation—How Can the Americans and the British Understand Each Other?***

WE HAVE SEEN that one way in which public relations can operate on the international level is through psychological warfare. But there is another, related aspect of the United States' world-wide activities in which effective public relations is equally important.

Today our national security is buttressed by a series of alliances with other freedom-loving countries. There is the Atlantic Pact, and there are the countries with which we co-operate in the United Nations, whose troops are fighting beside ours in Korea. Our own national welfare and the welfare of the world require that the United States maintain the best possible relations with its allies. This calls for the best possible mutual understanding.

This is particularly true in the case of Great Britain. Writing in the New York Times of June 12, 1951, Anthony Eden said: "Amid all the conflicts and perplexities of the world scene there is an essential, simple fact of which we must never lose sight. The British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States need each other and must live and work together. For upon their joint endeavor all our present and future plans depend."

Emphasizing that Anglo-American official policies in the Near and Far East were at that moment fortunately closer than they had been for some time, the British leader pointed out that, nevertheless, "the lessons of the recent past should not be forgotten. It must be at any time disturbing to learn of divergences to and fro across the Atlantic," Mr. Eden said. "In the nature of things they are not easy to influence. We have to be careful not to exaggerate their significance, or we shall merely be playing the game of those who want to see differences become a rift, then a chasm. At the same time, it is dangerous to ignore them, for then they may grow unperceived until they assume alarming proportions." The British statesman then

*called attention to the vital fact that "misunderstandings arise from a false conception of the burden each nation carries."*

*Mr. Eden's remarks confirmed the impressions I had received when I visited England several years before, in the summer of 1948. At that time, the people of the United States and the people of Britain seemed to be further apart than at any time since before World War I. A London weekly, The Leader, asked me to write an article on what was wrong with Anglo-American relations, and what might be done, from a public relations point of view, to improve them. To illustrate how public relations may be applied creating better understanding between two countries, I am reproducing that article with some minor changes.*

There is no doubt that the people of Britain and the people of the United States are further apart than at any time since before World War I. You read it in the newspapers, you hear it over the radio, your taxi driver talks to you about the dollar crisis and what will happen between the United States and Britain. Newspaper leaders, depending upon the point of view, give their solution of the problem, whether it be the *New York Times* or the *London Times*. Quick solutions are sought and proposed: devaluation, an economic union of Britain and the United States, with, as a porter suggested, Britain the forty-ninth state, getting in even before Hawaii.

The present dollar crisis shows what can happen when two peoples do not understand one another. Both of our peoples look for quick solutions, for scapegoats and whipping boys, instead of carefully examining all the facts and coming to sound and reasonable conclusions. On both sides of the Atlantic we permit ourselves to be swayed by the biased or selfish interests of those who want to exploit our differences.

The dangerous fact is that the people of the two great democracies are today emphasizing their disagreements rather than their areas of agreement. At the end of World War II we moved from a one-world conception, based on the wartime alliance of the antifascist powers, to a two-world conception: the world of democracy versus the world of communism. That was evidently what Stalin wanted, and that is what he got. We must now avoid at all

costs a further division into three worlds in which Britain and the United States would represent opposing conceptions of democracy.

Petty quarrels and differences are almost traditional in Anglo-American relations. They are nothing to worry about. What is serious, however, is a sustained and deliberate campaign—for whatever purpose—to promote a wide cleavage between the two nations.

In any solution of the grave crisis British-American relations are passing through, we must look for a solution that is lasting, based on the mutual understanding that our beliefs and values have a common past, a common present, and a common future—that our goals are the same.

If we accept this objective, the problem immediately becomes one that transcends dollars and pence. It becomes a problem that must be resolved in terms of the enlightened self interest of the two parties concerned.

Thus, since we are both democracies, the decision must depend on the enlightened opinion of a public which, on both sides of the Atlantic, knows all the facts in the case and makes its decisions thereby. Public knowledge of facts is our first line of defense. What good are military plans by joint commissions of army and navy officers to defend the democracies unless these plans are backed by the will of the people? The army and navy of a democracy are powerless without the support of the people. Similarly, moves such as devaluation will not solve the basic problem. The solution must be sought on the level of real, long-term issues, not short-term irritations. Adjustment and resolution of difficulties must be brought about, however painful the task.

We must, first, examine all the facts and be sure that the 150,000,000 Americans and the 50,000,000 British know what they are. We must remember that Europe, and specifically Britain, has gone through two great wars in the last fifty years, that the destruction wrought in Europe is not only a matter of physical damage but of profound psychological and moral fatigue. In this period of postwar redevelopment a whole new world needs to be reconstructed by Great Britain at a time when leaders are tired and the people, to a large extent, feel the burden of self-sacrifice. We

must remember, too, that in the same period America has gone through certain basic changes. It has increased its efficiency and self-containment, and it has grown tremendously. It is no longer dependent on foreign imports and foreign goods. America is well-nigh self-contained economically. Even before the war, the United States imported less than 1 per cent of its consumer goods.

It was natural that several years ago the United States should come to the economic aid of the western European countries, in its own interests as well as theirs. Pump-priming was the objective. And few dispute that the economic pump was primed.

British postwar achievement has been phenomenal. But Britain is dependent on imports.

Under these circumstances, what can a public relations counselor offer? First, he might suggest that joint solution be found, not merely of the dollar-pound question, but of the entire problem of Anglo-American co-operation in terms of the future. From an economic standpoint, Britain must, if it wants to export, lower its production costs through increased efficiency in production; second, it must reduce costs based on cartel and trade association price-fixing.

Industrialists in Britain have talked much about "free enterprise," but I am not persuaded that they really mean it. Many industrialists frankly oppose newcomers who make use of technical advances that give added advantages. The industrialist ideal in England seems to be really a self-regulated industry that would not move faster than the slowest unit toward new methods of production and selling. In a brilliant analysis a writer for *The Economist* has remarked: "So seductive is the way of life which industrial Britain inherited from agrarian Britain that almost every industrialist has sought to make himself, in greater or lesser degree, a country gentleman." This may have worked when Britain held the undisputed industrial leadership of the world. It is not an attitude that will help Britain win export markets in the highly competitive world of today. Only better and more aggressive merchandising will sell British goods in foreign markets now.

At the same time, we in the United States must appreciate the special handicaps under which Britain labors in a postwar period. In my London paper I found an American buyer writing: "I have found

on this, my first and last visit to this country: your trains dirty; your telephones awful—operators are slow—the people who answer are dumb (I rang a Birmingham firm yesterday, it cost me two calls to get to the manager after speaking to four people); your food is badly cooked; your people are apathetic; veiled insolence in hotels; a lot of she-men in your Government departments. I do not wonder you are short of dollars. I have not bought anything, but fly to France tomorrow.” Clearly, he has not stayed in Britain long enough to understand either its problems or its customs. He acts on first impressions, but it is first impressions that may prove costly to the country. Britain can take more aggressive steps to get tourists—an important invisible import of dollars.

This entails British activities in the United States as well as activities aimed to orient the Britisher at home to the overseas tourist. It should entail, too, the elimination of the pin-prick annoyances the tourist is subject to, for they not only annoy him but, from the broadest standpoint, hurt the country as well. Pin-pricks, when the tourist gets home, are prejudicial to good will. I can name many annoyances. Here is one. An American guest arrives to occupy a suite in a big West End hotel; he finds baskets of fruit in his room; he thinks they are a gracious gesture from the proprietor. At the end of the week he finds that his breakfasts have been charged at the rate of some pounds, and upon inquiry discovers that the fruit he thought was a British gesture of good will has cost him no less than five shillings a peach, and so on. There are minor annoyances: unexplained customs regulations that limit cigarettes to four hundred to a tourist; difficulties in the purchase of goods that are to be taken abroad. All these irritations could be eliminated by a campaign of education of the American who comes to Great Britain, telling him what he may expect, and of the Britisher, telling him how to deal with the tourist when he comes.

Then there is the question of what to tell the Americans about Great Britain in their home country. Let us agree that we have common traditions, but not all of us are aware of it. Nor do we know as much as we should about British life and folkways, of customs and habits. We are apt, too, to misunderstand British actions at high levels unless they are explained. And sometimes actions of minor

importance are undertaken that we misinterpret and that might better have not been initiated.

What is the remedy? I believe that at the top level of policymaking, in the British Cabinet, there should be an expert public relations man to interpret to the British Cabinet the probable impact of a policy before it is translated into law or action. A good statesman is not necessarily a good public relations man. Too often the public relations officers in government are given a policy to disseminate after it has been decided upon, rather than being called into discussion before it is made to inquire as to its possible effect.

This is perhaps not the place to discuss personalities. But I would suggest emphatically that the man who acts as ambassador from Great Britain to the United States has to play a role which is the opposite of a retiring, academic, seldom-heard representative. The Americans are a talkative people, and they are not afraid to make mistakes in talking. The success of Lord Halifax as ambassador was largely explained by his outspoken attitude on Anglo-American problems. This is the time for forthright and frequent utterance by all Anglo-American spokesmen.

The whole problem of British information to America should be treated from the standpoint of the engineering of consent—making the American people aware of, and persuading them to accept, our common present, our common future. This is not a matter of handouts or a mimeograph machine. It is more than supplying the press and radio with information. For information may not be understood. Any activity carried out should be part of a broad integrated program covering effective research, strategy, themes, organization, planning, timing, and tactics. Call this propaganda if you will, it is aimed at accomplishing the end we all want. If we are to survive we must understand each other.

The United States must do its part, too, from the economic angle. It must lower such tariffs as keep out goods that Britain produces better and cheaper. The United States must encourage rather than discourage British insurance companies, which know their business extremely well and are important in bringing in dollars. America should encourage the tourist traffic more than it does.

As a first step toward better relations the two countries might well form a Joint Board for Mutual Understanding. They already have a joint military staff, working on problems of joint defense. But military preparations are useless unless they are fully backed by the peoples of both democracies. The road to survival must be built on a common morale based on mutual understanding.

The Anglo-American Joint Board for Mutual Understanding might be either an official body established by the governments of both countries, or a body of private citizens—prominent educators, scientists, writers, industrialists, trade union leaders, public relations counsel, and so on.

If, through such a joint board as I have proposed, both of us had done what our military people are doing, built up our common goals on common understanding, we would not now be in hazard of being divided not only into two worlds but into three.

Thomas Jefferson said the last recourse is the common man. It is upon this man and his understanding that the democracies must base their case. He will not do wrong if he knows the facts.

## ***Public Relations as Aid to Ethnic Harmony: Hawaii—The Almost Perfect State***

*WITH the United States engaged in a global conflict of ideas, Hawaii is of special importance in the American commonwealth. It is essential to the national defense and the public interest. It is the great symbol of American democracy at the crossroads of the Pacific, looking both toward the East and toward the West. It must so develop that to millions in Asia it stands as an affirmative denial of Communist charges that Americanism means racism or imperialism. In this respect, Hawaii is invaluable as a psychological rampart in the national defense of the United States.*

*Hawaii is also the melting pot of the Pacific, assimilating people of Oriental ancestry, just as the continental United States has assimilated Europeans to build a great democratic nation. It is of further significance to the continental United States because it is setting a successful pattern for the working out of maladjustments between people of diverse ethnic backgrounds.*

*Finally, Hawaii is of immediate importance to the more than 500,000 people living there. There they are maintaining and advancing their standards of living and adjustment under a democratic system.*

*Taking these statements as Hawaii's functions and goals, how can the people of the islands work toward their speedy achievement?*

*In the summer of 1950, in Honolulu, I taught public relations as visiting professor at the University of Hawaii. Problems of human relations always interest me, and the problems of Hawaii were particularly intriguing because of the significance of the islands to the United States. During my stay in the islands I had the good fortune to meet people from all groups and callings, from bank presidents to students. I met and talked with nearly one thousand people.*

*That summer the Rotary Club of Honolulu asked me to discuss how the people of the islands could work toward the speedy achievement of Hawaii's goals, and later an abstract of my remarks*



*appeared in The Hawaii Chinese Journal. Still later I wrote an article for The New Leader magazine entitled "Hawaii—The Almost Perfect State," which appeared in the issue of November 20, 1950. This chapter—based on that article<sup>1</sup>—attempts to give a public relations approach to the handling of a community situation from the broad national point of view of our American democracy.*

Most mainlanders, as the Hawaiians call us, think of the islanders, if at all, as romantic, grassskirted natives who dance the hula and bask on the sands of Waikiki. These cliches are played up by the Hawaiian Tourist Bureau and the Matson Line, and bright young mainland copywriters prepare appropriate advertisements about them that are read by millions in the United States.

Actually, 85 per cent of the 500,000 islanders, United States citizens stemming from the most varied ethnic backgrounds—Occidental and Oriental—live in a diversified economy. Tourism is a minor part of it, contributing only \$50,000,000, drawn annually from the mainland. Sugar and pineapple account for \$205,500,000, and Hawaiian services to the armed forces and federal civilian agencies for another \$175,000,000.

Particularly at this time, when the United States is deeply concerned with problems in the Orient, Hawaii has a fourfold significance. First, it is our island bastion in the Pacific. Second, it disproves Soviet accusations that imperialism and racism are our national policy. Third, it is a dramatic demonstration to the mainland that Americans of the most diverse backgrounds can live together in harmony. And fourth, it demonstrates that 500,000 Americans, 2,500 miles distant in the Pacific, can successfully work out their destiny democratically.

President Truman affirmed Hawaii's indispensability to the defense of the United States during the fight for Hawaiian statehood in the Eighty-first Congress. Pearl Harbor, our largest naval base, was effectively used in World War II, and during the Korean war Hawaii has amply proved its value as an airlift transfer point. Hawaii also is headquarters of our trusteeship of the Pacific islands.

Hawaii's real and symbolic value as a melting pot is immeasurable. Most Hawaiians are of Oriental extraction. Yet no Jim Crow laws or

race riots or lynchings mar its democracy. Despite their high color visibility, the residents are nevertheless strongly behind ethnic equalitarianism. This is more than can be said for the mainland, where maladjustment between Negroes and whites, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, foreign-born and native-born often has popular sanction, sometimes expressed in enactment of laws and sometimes in their violation. Hawaii demonstrates the fact that the most diversified groups can work together and solve their problems successfully.

Hawaii's health, social welfare, educational, and other governmental services top those of many states. Twelve states contribute less in tax revenue to the federal government than Hawaii. This fine record has been made under local guidance, since the Territory elects its own officials, except the governor, secretary, territorial supreme court and circuit judges, who are appointed by the President.

Hawaii has reached many of its goals. It has attained political self-sufficiency, with high standards of democratic living and economic self-containment. It clearly deserves statehood. Yet, despite these accomplishments, there are still some gaps to be bridged. To understand today's problems, it is necessary to look briefly at some highlights of the history of Hawaii.

Polynesian tribes from the South Seas settled in the volcanic Hawaiian Islands centuries before Captain Cook discovered them in 1778. Hawaii's delightful climate and scenery and its geographic position athwart Pacific trade lanes made it a magnetic haven for wintering whalers in the early nineteenth century. The Chinese sandalwood trade and, later, sugar and pineapple culture brought further development.

Congregational missionaries migrated from New England to the islands in 1820 and converted the Polynesians to Christianity. From 1820 to 1898, with the aid of missionaries and of natives and white settlers who went to the islands from America and Europe, the royal house of Hawaii maintained an independent kingdom. Meanwhile, the French, the Russians, and the English plotted to seize this oceanic prize. In the end, United States domination, motivated by

economic forces and our national interest, prevailed, and the islands were annexed in 1898. In 1900, they became a territory.

The mid-nineteenth century speeded up Hawaii's agricultural growth. But as the native Polynesians did not want to become plantation workers, plantation owners imported workers from Portugal, Norway, Italy, Russia, Poland, and the United States without success. In the eighteen sixties, Chinese coolie labor was imported to tend the sugar cane. There followed successive waves of Koreans, Japanese, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos.

The second generation of immigrants—Oriental and Occidental—accepted American ideals and deserted the plantations for the villages and cities, where they sought education and became tradesmen and professionals. Plantation owners, desperate for labor, then scoured the world for new labor.

This continual search for labor has made Hawaii a melting-pot. Acculturation of first-, second-, and third-generation Americans went on at an astonishing rate. But the United States—descended white plantation owners in control of the island economy remained plantation-minded and feudal. In the two-class system of owner-and-worker, the white planters lived as colonial masters, asserting their “white supremacy” in major and minor ways. This social, economic, and political domination centered in the factoring system. A few companies controlled much land; a handful of them represented the plantation owner in every transaction; and the workers were exploited economically, socially, and politically.

The group in social control of Hawaii today stems from these origins. It is known loosely as the “Big Five,” although actually it includes more than five organizations. Some eighty white corporation directors practically dominate the socioeconomic life of the islands, and until recently, they dominated political life, too. Whites arriving from the mainland are a liberalizing influence, but pressure is exerted on them by resident white families to “confine their more intimate social life to *haoles* [whites].” Local top-drawer *haoles* are accessible only to mainland visitors with good introductions. The system of land tenure clinches the hold of these *haoles*, for much of the land is trustee and rented on leaseholds. A land-hungry population is frustrated.

The New Deal and the National Labor Relations Board brought the Big Five under some social control. No longer were they absolute. Pearl Harbor further limited their power. Martial law established on the islands by the military forces was later declared unconstitutional, though at the behest of the Big Five the military froze wages and workers in their jobs and sat on the economic lid during the war.

Hawaii's workers felt exploited and disillusioned after the war. Prior to Pearl Harbor their trade unions were weak. The Communists took advantage of the situation by exploiting legitimate grievances and saying that labor and communism were synonymous. Myopic employers encouraged and exaggerated this identification in the public mind. But the grievances behind the crippling strikes we heard so much about on the mainland had their roots in actual conditions.

The inhabitants of Hawaii long ago ceased to believe that all white men are gods. The public schools, of course, have emphasized American ideals to a whole generation. With this growing democratic consciousness, the new generation of Americans of Oriental background threw off the political yoke of the Big Five. Absorption of foreign Occidentals is accepted on the mainland. But the problem in Hawaii is superficially different because Oriental faces are different. Yet among Americans of Caucasian, Japanese, part-Hawaiian, Filipino, Chinese, Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, and Korean ethnic backgrounds, 28 per cent of the marriages are out-marriages.

Unfortunately the relationship between Americans of Caucasian background and those of Oriental origin has deteriorated since World War II despite the extraordinary wartime record of regiments made up of Americans of Japanese background. The whites in power resented the new Americanism of the "awakened foreigners." All this is not visible to the casual eye of the tourist. He sees all sorts of Americans with different kinds of faces and assumes they are in complete harmony. But I found crippling maladjustments in Hawaii that must be eliminated. And they can be eliminated, for the great majority of Hawaiians are people of good will and profoundly patriotic.

In 1947 several businessmen's organizations, including the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Hawaiian Employers Council, expanded their public relations

effort to cope with the situation. Unfortunately, they dealt mainly in words instead of tackling the realities behind the situation. The Hawaiian Economic Foundation, with far-sighted Claude Jagger as president, was formed at this time and helped somewhat.

Such disharmony as exists can be blamed for the most part on the little group of myopic men who constitute an expanded Big Five, who are outmoded and outdated in their attitudes and policies, and who are still trying to run the islands. Among them are businessmen, bankers, some educators, and professional men. They try to maintain social and economic control in spite of their small number and against the wishes of the great majority. They have power, and they respond to public opinion only when it is expressed vigorously in social or political action.

An analysis of rumors that I uncovered in talking with hundreds of people led me to the conclusion that rumor is the weapon of hostility. Research at Harvard and other universities has proved conclusively that the spread of rumors indicates either economic or psychological insecurity. Gossip or rumors are a common weapon of hostility against a group or individual. In Hawaii rumors fall into two categories: (1) ethnic rumors that deal with relationships between Caucasian and other ethnic groups, and (2) economic rumors that play up the middleman and the man in the street as victims of the Interests, the Big Five, Big Business. The rumors point out that big business is trying to tighten its control, is causing unemployment, is increasing prices, and is using bank credit and shipping as its means of control. Rumors cannot be laughed off, because they reveal human relations. Attitudes toward one's fellow man, one's job, and one's community as expressed in such rumors can make or halt progress.

Here are some common sayings about ethnic groups that I picked up from Caucasians: "Japanese are clean, maintain group solidarity, do not think but have a good memory." "Chinese are cunning, are good businessmen." "Filipinos are emotional." "Hawaiians are happy-go-lucky." "Koreans are hot-tempered."

Hawaiians of Oriental background give the other side of the picture; they deplore:

1. Segregation of families of Oriental background in certain residential districts. This leads to bad feeling among the victims of this discrimination and provides an opportunity for agitators.

2. Segregating homes of white supervisors. This prevents groups from learning about one another and creates hard feeling.

3. Separate chambers of commerce along ethnic lines. This leads to strong blocs in business that weaken its unity.

4. The educational trend to private schools and away from public schools. This eliminates the impact of the public school and its value as the common cultural source for future generations.

5. The practice of chain stores and bank branches of selecting personnel to conform with local ethnic population groups. This hurts rather than helps business in the long run.

6. The practice of some sales organizations, such as insurance companies, of selecting sales teams in ethnic groups to compete with others who concentrate sales efforts on those groups. This should be discouraged. The practice of selecting contact men, for ethnic reasons, to parley with certain groups (whatever may be the immediate requirement of the situation) does not lead to longtime adjustment. It accentuates differences instead of similarities.

7. Americans of Oriental background are often paid less than *haoles* for the same job. The fact that some Oriental firms practice discrimination, too, is no justification for this situation.

8. The practice of asking for racial extraction and father's job on employee record cards causes antagonism. Rightly or wrongly, many do not want to put on record that their fathers were plantation workers.

9. Some firms hire *haoles* on the basis of friendship, family relationship, or social prestige, or because *haoles* don't like to be subordinated to non-*haoles*. This is a common complaint.

10. Employment want ads specifying certain ethnic groups cause antagonism.

11. Constant accusation that non-*haoles* have limited opportunity in big business firms, that executives are brought in from mainland universities, and that students from the University of Hawaii are passed over.

12. Social discrimination is bitterly resented. Corporation directorships are held by the men who are also social leaders. The prominent clubs—the Oahu, Outrigger, and Pacific—bar membership to Americans of Oriental background.

13. The University maintains certain customs irksome to members of certain ethnic groups. Students are required to specify "race" on matriculation. Americans of Oriental background say it is difficult to attain positions of importance at the University, pointing out that among the deans none is of Oriental background despite the fact that the University is tax-supported. The University might well assume leadership in educating and broadening the point of view of our island citizens on these matters. Regettably it evades and avoids

the issues. Another important educational institution, the Punahou School, has a small, rigid quota for Americans of Oriental background.

14. Another source of friction is the practice among some University societies of restricting membership either entirely or almost entirely to certain ethnic groups. A parallel feeling of humiliation is caused by the registration of racial extraction on cards for certain courses.

These specific charges of un-American discrimination represent a few of the reactions expressed by the nearly one thousand people, ranging from top employers to taxidriviers, with whom I talked. They reveal a good deal of frustration, and frustration can lead to aggression. There are, of course, other equally involved intragroup relations that need adjustment. There are imperfect relations between Americans of Japanese and those of Okinawan background; between Americans of Japanese and of Korean origin; between Americans of Hakka Chinese and Pun-ti origin.

Ethnic prejudices have curious manifestations in Hawaii. An example is the inconsistent and erratic "racial" statistics, so called, that are taken. Many institutions have their own pet methods of classification, and in most of them there are duplications and omissions that vitiate their significance. The Territorial Bureau of Statistics uses a ninefold classification that breaks down the inhabitants into Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, Caucasian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and All Others. But the Department of Public Instruction and the Police Department use a different classification: Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, Spanish, Other Caucasian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and All Others. Various institutions reporting to the Territorial Department of Institutions have still other types of classification. So has the Oahu Prison. The Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare uses no racial breakdown.

This variation in nomenclature shows how little the statistics are actually worth. Yet this unscientific hocus-pocus is still indulged in for "scientific" reasons.

That this nonsense can be stopped has been shown by the Portuguese in Hawaii. Formerly they were classified separately as "Portuguese." Persons of Portuguese ancestry protested, and as a

result the 1940 census dropped that category. Portuguese are now classified as Caucasians.

Intellectuals in Hawaii recognize that the term “race,” used loosely and unscientifically to define national, geographic, cultural, and religious origins, arouses resentment; nevertheless, they bow to custom and continue to use it. But the democratic society of Hawaii need not perpetuate this perverse concept. A scientific solution was recently proposed by UNESCO, which urged that “ethnic background” replace the use of “race.” Terms like “ancestry” or “ancestral group” would also be clear without arousing resentment.

Some argue that the problems I have touched upon here are delicate and complex and that progress in solving them must be gradual. “Don’t force the issue,” they say. “Look at the advances already made.” But speed is imperative, for Communist agitators are neither gradual nor quiet, and it is important that Hawaii continue to disprove to the Far East the Communist charge that our national policy is one of imperialism and racism.

Improvement in intergroup relations is all the more important today because today the situation in Hawaii is excellent on the whole. Nothing I have said here is intended to suggest that cataclysmic reform is needed in the islands. On the contrary, Hawaii is possibly as nearly democratic as any community in the world. It comes close to realizing the four functions and goals projected above.

Full achievement of these goals would require only a very slight change of attitude on the part of a very small number of people toward the residual problems discussed here.



## ***Human Relations—The Way to Labor-Management Adjustments***

*FOR the United States to maintain and expand its living standards under our democratic profit system, harmonious relations between management and labor are imperative. They present primarily a problem in human relations.*

*“Culture is a seamless web,” Stuart Chase has observed. “All useful conclusions about human relations, the behavior of groups and social psychology are relevant to the factory, the office, and the profession of management.” They are, of course, equally relevant to the activities of labor unions.*

*In all misunderstandings between management and labor, both sides must of necessity appeal to public opinion. In a talk delivered at the Twenty-third Annual Industrial Conference of the Pennsylvania State College,<sup>1</sup> I pointed out that the attempt of either management or labor to win public opinion to its side alone is in itself no solution. This chapter deals with the problem of how management can build a real case which both the public and labor will accept. In the hope of stimulating a solution, I have outlined a seven-point program.*

Management still has a crucial problem in labor relations. Seemingly, it has tried to handle the situation by a magic method, somehow mysteriously influencing public opinion to support management, thus removing all difficulties and unpleasantness. The basic question—how management can effectively present its labor relations case before the bar of public opinion—needs to be examined in the light of management’s actions, both toward labor and toward the public.

I shall postpone conclusions until after we have examined the facts. One outstanding fact is this: In the year 1946, 116,000,000 man-days were lost by strikes, exceeding by far the loss for any previous full year in our history.<sup>1</sup> We must realize that strikes are symptomatic of a disease. They are not the cause of disruption in

labor-management relations, but their result. Adjustments must be made by the use of intelligence and logic, or the number of man-days lost through strikes may well be even greater.

We must remember that the situation is highly complicated, and that oversimplification will accomplish nothing. But in order to get at the cause of friction in industrial relations, let us agree on one basic assumption: The United States must have internal peace between management and labor if we are to maintain and expand our standard of living under a democratic profit system. Therefore, labor and management must find larger areas of agreement in planning and working together for common goals. Both must assume responsibility to the public welfare to ensure that our system shall function effectively, prosper, and grow.

All of us want abundance, stability, freedom, and peace. We want to avoid insecurity, unemployment, depression, scarcity.

Management must remember that there are fourteen to sixteen million members of trade unions in America today, organized in the AFL, the CIO, and independent unions. (Multiply that figure by the number of their dependents and you have accounted for practically half of our population.) It must realize that in today's world new political philosophies and values confront us everywhere—and that it cannot merely defend the *status quo* if we in America are to survive and go forward. It must remember that unions and collective bargaining are an integral part of our industrial system; that wages will keep pace with the price level; that, unless war comes, hours of work will become fewer, not more; and that standards and conditions of work will improve.

To survive, the present industrial system must be capable of functioning without continuous internecine struggle. If either management or labor succeeds in tipping the balance of government too far in its favor, we are headed for trouble. Government in the role of umpire should be fair and just, informed and intelligent, and unprejudiced toward either side.

A solution must be found to labor and management maladjustments before management can present its case effectively to the public. To win the support of public opinion, management must have a real case that enlightened labor and the public will support—

just as labor must have a real case that enlightened management and the public will support. The solution must be evolutionary, not revolutionary. Present points of view and courses of action must be adjusted to conditions that actually exist today.

This solution cannot be merely a matter of words, press releases or press relations, or a superficial selling job. Incantation of the magic phrases, "free enterprise," "the American system," "the law of supply and demand," "no government regulation," is of no avail. Repetition of them is to place one's faith in witchcraft. Public opinion polls indicate that the public will be the decisive factor in the outcome of the struggle between management and labor. It would be well, then, to examine some of these polls so that we may have a sound basis of fact for our conclusions.

In the January and June, 1946, issues of *Fortune*, Elmo Roper published the results of polls in which the public was queried concerning which side it would favor in industrial disputes if it were called upon to referee. In January 1946, 45 per cent of the public favored management, 26 per cent supported labor, and 29 per cent had no opinion. By June, 1946, public opinion had swung to labor's side to this degree: 37 per cent favored labor, 36 per cent favored management, and 26 per cent had no opinion. In March, 1949, a poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion on whether labor laws should be so drawn as to permit the right to strike showed the following results: 55 per cent said "yes," 33 per cent said "no," and 12 per cent had no opinion.

The shift to labor came from management's supporters. The public adherents of management had lost faith in management's handling of the industrial relations situation. It should be noted that there is no preponderant public attitude favoring either labor or management. Further proof that even management had a bad opinion of its industrial relations is indicated by another poll that appeared in the March, 1946, issue of *Fortune* and showed that management does not believe it has fulfilled its social responsibility to workers. Representative executives were asked whether they believed management had social responsibility beyond the sphere of profits. Ninety-three and one-half per cent of management thought management should assume social responsibility. But when

management appraised itself, approximately one-third of the executives replied that only a quarter or less of management has social consciousness. Another one-third thought less than half of management has social consciousness, and only one-third believed that more than 50 per cent of management has social consciousness.

A National Opinion Research Center poll of September, 1945, showed the following response to the question: "Suppose the government has no control over how businesses are run in this country. Whom do you think this would help most?" Seventy-four per cent thought this would help big business most; 11 per cent the people as a whole; 11 per cent didn't know; 6 per cent thought small business. (Some of the respondents gave more than one answer.) And here is further evidence. In a poll published in *Fortune* in June, 1946, the public blamed labor unions, government, and management equally for their parts in the poor handling of the strike situation in the winter of 1945-46. Twenty-seven and eight-tenths per cent felt that labor unions had done the poorest job, 24.9 per cent named government, 22.5 per cent said management, 24.8 per cent did not know. This response certainly indicates that the public has no preponderant feeling one way or the other. It also indicates that labor and management both need the support of public opinion. An encouraging straw in the wind, shown in a *Fortune* poll published in the spring of 1946, is that 52.3 per cent of Americans are optimistic that good industrial relations may be brought about, only 27.2 per cent think it unlikely, and 20.5 per cent do not know. It is particularly encouraging to note that the percentage of professionals and executives who are optimistic is 5 per cent higher than other occupational groups.

How can management build a real case that both the public and labor will accept?

In dealing with labor-management problems, management suffers from a cultural time lag. As I have previously pointed out, this phrase succinctly describes the gap that exists between what people actually do and what they could do in the light of the knowledge available. It sums up the holdover of outworn and antiquated attitudes.

For instance, in 1868, according to a Massachusetts Senate Document, an agent of an important factory was asked whether manufacturers did anything for the physical, intellectual, and moral welfare of their workers. "We never do," he said. "As for myself, I regard my work people just as I regard my machinery. So long as they can do my work for what I choose to pay them, I keep them, getting out of them all I can. . . . When my machines get old and useless, I reject them and get new, and these people are part of my machinery." A businessman who thinks along 1868 lines today (and there are far too many who do) illustrates the operation of the cultural time lag. Today, he cannot safely profess unconcern for the human factor in industrial organization. Morris Viteles, in his book *Industrial Psychology*, writes: ". . . The success of our industrial civilization, as well as of individual plants, depends not only upon the worker's skill in the operation of the machine but also upon such strictly human attributes as his attitude toward them and upon the satisfaction which he obtains in their operation."

Narrowing the gap between this type of industrial relations outlook and that of 1868 is one of management's chief tasks today. It can no longer safely continue with discredited, narrow-gauge theories to guide its actions. F. J. Roethlisberger, in his *Management and Morale*, wrote of the Western Electric Company's program of human relations at the Hawthorne Works. He stressed the need for management to develop equilibrium between its demands for efficiency and the desire of the worker for personal satisfaction and social acceptance. Only when the people at the top of the organization really understand the feelings and sentiments of the people at the bottom, he says, can they make the needs of management understood by the workers.

A poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion in December, 1949, asked whether luncheon clubs as informal meetings between factory workers and businessmen to promote better understanding should be favored. Results showed 71 per cent to be in favor, 17 per cent opposed, and 11 per cent of no opinion.

The question resolves itself into management's attitudes and actions toward the worker as evidenced daily in every point of contact between them, from matters of pay to ventilation. Theory

must be behind all action in the hard world of reality. Every action of man is based primarily on theory. Industry gratefully applies theory to its problems of technological development, but it is far less enlightened when dealing with the human element in labor relations.

This is typical of modern society, in which our use of technological knowledge has far outstripped our knowledge of human behavior. Today industrial management must apply to its industrial relations the theories of human behavior developed in the social science laboratories. To use this knowledge is not being visionary. It is the highest type of practical, self-interested, enlightened realism.

Management has emphasized the technical and financial features of business at the expense of the psychological factors. What good is it to use old methods if they don't work? What use is it to hold lines that will not hold? It is interesting and significant, for instance, to know that workers' demands for status and satisfaction are much more positive than is commonly believed.

The desire of the individual worker for status, personal achievement, social acceptance, the feeling of *belonging*, shows up in many different ways. He may want to obtain psychological, social, and financial satisfaction. Security, higher pay, opportunity, status, and recognition of accomplishment are all important. A telephone girl expressed it this way to a *New York Times* reporter: "We're telling the company we're not part of the switchboard any more. We are people and we got to be treated like people." Another worker said to the same reporter, "I'm ready to admit our people could get a lot more done without really extending themselves. But why should they? They'll never do it as long as they believe that the boss, not the workers, will get the benefit from their working harder. You can talk yourself blue in the face about how prosperity for everybody depends on high production. You'll never make it real to the worker in the shop unless he feels that he is a partner in the business. And when I say partner, I mean partner. That's not just something in an annual report or a Christmas message from the front office. Partnership is something that affects the whole running of the plant. You've got to give the workers a voice in how things are done and how the profits are divided."

That this sentiment is typical is shown by a survey of factory workers made by *Fortune* in 1943, when 75 per cent of those queried stated they would like to elect someone to represent them on the board of directors or some sort of management council. They thought their elected official should have something to say regarding working conditions, wages, promotions, production plans, and salary of management.

Father William J. Smith, in his book, *Spotlight on Labor Unions*, expressed the same point of view. He sees an era of increased industrial conflict ahead unless labor is given the status of "co-partnership" in the management of industrial enterprises; because, he writes, profits, prices, and rates of production are legitimate concerns of labor and have a vital relationship to working conditions. He also warns industry that unless management takes the leadership in forming and building better relationships between itself and its workers, and recognizes the dignity of the individual, conflict will continue in an intensified form.

Today many Americans think that labor should also be given greater participation in the nation's defense policies, although opinion on this matter is about evenly divided. A poll taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion in April, 1951, revealed that for nearly every voter who thought labor should have more to say about the country's defense policies, there was another voter who believed that labor was getting enough attention in the defense set-up. But the pro-labor voters were slightly more numerous. Of those questioned, 41 per cent said labor should have more say, 40 per cent said it should not, and 19 per cent expressed no opinion.

The foregoing has been more than sufficient to illustrate the largely uncharted aspects of human relations in the labor-management field. Management must solve the question of its responsibilities before it can present a tenable case for itself.

In the hope of stimulating such a solution I should like to offer a long-range seven-point program.

1. We have a reservoir of knowledge, case methods, and studies on human relations and industrial relations. This material is scattered all over America, in university, private, and public libraries, and in the minds of individuals. American industry, through national

organizations, trade associations, or individual organizations, should study and codify this material, make it widely available in intelligible form. We need mining and refining of this material, so it can be put to use.

2. Many organizations are studying these problems and publishing their findings. Management should co-operate with and assist such organizations by supporting them through financial or personnel aid. The American Management Association, the Society for the Advancement of Management, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and the American Sociological Society all merit investigation by businessmen, who may profit from the studies these organizations are making and act on their findings.

3. Universities and colleges are also engaged in serious studies of human and industrial relations problems. To name only a few, there are extensive programs under way at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth College, Princeton University, and Cornell University. Management should actively support the universities, aid and co-operate through scholarships and other kinds of endowments, through the use of research, faculties, and graduates.

4. Technological research should be applied to increasing industrial productivity through more efficient machinery. If our system of free enterprise is to go ahead, increased savings in production must be passed on to the public in lower costs. Some uninformed labor leaders fight technological efficiency on the grounds that it will reduce employment. Intelligent management and labor leaders do not stand in the way of progress that will benefit both.

5. Progressive management has already demonstrated in action a number of ideas that represent the beginning of an attack on the industrial relations problem. Some of the plans that have proved fruitful are the annual or guaranteed wage, arbitration, incentive pay, and fact-finding boards. But these methods are only a first step. Additional ways and methods must be found; we must advance still further. And all plans need deeper study and consideration.

6. There must be a wider and more intelligent use of specialized industrial relations personnel. The industrial relations man can be an important bridge between management and the employees. Many



industrial relations men handle workers as if they were their enemies rather than their co-workers. Others don't even know there is a book on the subject. But there are men who do know, and such men, and the companies employing them, have fewer industrial relations problems.

7. The public must be educated to an understanding of what the American industrial system means to them. Now we get our public education in the form of slogans and biased propaganda from all sides. We must attack the problem on an objective level, with a genuine desire to inform, expressing our aims in straightforward terms that everyone will understand. Intelligent men and women interested in preserving an evolutionary democratic America must aid and assist in the process. To preserve America, we must preserve a productive and progressive business structure.

Labor, too, as a large segment of the public, must be educated. Some of labor's leadership is poor, just as some of management's leadership is poor by its own self-appraisal. There are labor dictators and labor monopolists, just as there are dictators and monopolists in the ranks of management. Labor should be organized on a more democratic basis.

The labor movement in this country is still relatively young, and while some of its leaders are mature, others are unaccustomed to responsibility. Management can aid unions to become mature, and it must abandon the thesis that it will profit from disorganization in labor. It is true that some labor leadership is undisciplined and irresponsible, that there are wildcat, outlaw, jurisdictional, and slow-down strikes. This is all the more reason for management to encourage the training of an intelligent, mature labor leadership. If management does not, demagogues may gain control. Partnership between workers and management can come only as the result of maturity on both sides. And it might be well to point out that no legalistic solution, no fist from above, can solve the problem.

There is a wealth of experience to indicate that industrial peace may be realized through co-operative employer-employee relationships. As examples, we have but to study the stable bargaining relationships that have existed for many years between employer associations and metropolitan unions in such industries as

the needle trades, men's and women's clothing, men's hats, and millinery.

Our emphasis must be on co-operation, in domestic affairs as in international. Internationally, with the threat of the atomic bomb hanging over us, we are striving for one world. In our industrial relations in this country, we must strive for one world also. With much of management opposed to the approximately sixteen million Americans who are members of labor unions, we can readily see that unless an *entente* is brought about, we shall have a debacle. The debacle will be a dictatorship of the right or the left aimed at keeping one or the other side in order.

Management and labor must both do their part, to see that they conform to the new conditions, that change is kept within a working evolutionary framework. The attempt of either management or labor to win public opinion to its side alone is in itself no solution. The job both of management and of labor must be to put their own houses in order so that they can begin to develop a public opinion that will itself look beyond the conflicting claims of group interest. There is no short-cut to this goal.

About the only guarantee of industrial peace is for management and labor alike to apply the science of human relationships to this problem. If management accepts its responsibility to achieve co-partnerships with workers, the public will give management its vote of confidence.

## ***An Educational Program for Unions***

*THE preceding chapter attempted to apply public relations principles to certain specific problems of labor-management adjustment. The problems discussed were those that management faces and which management must attempt to solve. Here I shall deal with certain public relations problems that labor faces and which labor must attempt to solve.*

*This chapter, analyzing the educational activities of trade unions, suggests that unions have an important task to perform: namely, to carry on a factual educational campaign to instruct the general public, management, and trade union members in the nature and meaning of industrial democracy. The basic purpose of this educational campaign should be to create understanding and co-operation in industrial relations, so that management and labor can work together effectively for the welfare of the nation.*

Public opinion on most important issues goes through a process of evolution. At first, the public sees only a small part of any issue, just as the mountain climber at first can see only the nearby valley. Then, as the result of educational activities, people are gradually induced to see more and more until, like the mountain climber on the summit, they get a full view. Today, the whole problem of industrial relations is highly visible. The educational efforts of unions have been an important factor in forcing the issue out into the open.

Here I am going to discuss industrial relations from the point of view of public relations. I have had a good deal of day-to-day experience with these problems. I have made a study of business and public attitudes toward labor and labor and public attitudes toward business. I have studied union educational programs. It appears to me that unions still have an important job of work to do: namely, to carry on an intensified educational campaign, to instruct not only the general public and management but union members as well on the bedrock facts of the struggle for industrial democracy.

All of us want and expect a better life, a better home town, a better America, with security and employment for all. We have not succeeded yet. There are violent disagreements and conflicts on how to get the better life. We are bedeviled by psychological and economic insecurities. Cynicism, disillusionment, and frustration undermine our morale. We have turned our aggressions against one another instead of a common enemy. The United States is a battlefield for ideological and group struggles: white versus Negro, native-born versus foreign, management versus labor. We must take positive action against these internal dissensions, just as we are trying to take positive action in the face of international war.

The most important of these internal struggles is between management and labor. Industrial peace can be reached only if we pursue it intelligently. Together, labor and management can plan and work to realize the goals of our society. Punitive legislation will not solve our problems—the answer is education in industrial relations. The public, the employer, and the worker must know what it is all about. And labor must assume its part of this responsibility for education.

What, specifically, can the educational directors of the large unions do to cope with this problem?

It is essentially a public relations problem. People must want cleanliness before they will buy soap. They must want higher education before they will swarm to the colleges. Similarly, people must want unions before they are willing to support specific union goals. A public that understands what unions have done for the good of the country is going to be more open-minded and friendly to union programs. If the public does not understand the value of unions, it will be guided by prejudice, untruths, and distortions.

Let us examine one progressive union's educational program and see whether it starts in at the foundation and builds up. The program follows several broad lines:

First, the union educates its members to enter fully into the union's work, to develop effective and mature leadership for handling bargaining problems, to strengthen democracy within the organization, and to build union solidarity. Through these activities the union tries to reach its goals—higher real wages, industrywide

wage agreements, wage equalization, a guaranteed annual wage, and equality for women workers.

Second, the union tries to strengthen democracy in a number of ways. It fights inflation. It encourages union activity in civic and political matters, in co-operation with farmers, consumers, and others. It works for better housing, assistance to veterans, health programs, and civil liberties.

The third part of its program, not announced but well understood, is a matter of “selling” itself to its own rank and file. (Research, advertising, and public relations men in industry have the same problem. The client wants immediate visible results.)

As I study the union’s educational activities, it seems to me that it might undertake three additional programs of education, so that the public will understand what the union wants and why, and be more willing to accept its goals:

1. Make the public understand the value to the country of sound unions and mature union leadership.
2. Make the employer understand the value of unions to him and make him realize that he needs to apply the science of humanics, the study of human relations, to his relations with his employees.
3. Make the worker understand our industrial system and his role in it.

This type of education will lay the foundations for a broader understanding of controversial economic issues and build toward increased co-operation between labor and the other major sectors of our society.

The acute need for labor to educate the public has been demonstrated in many ways. Authoritative polls again and again reveal large areas of ignorance in the matter of industrial relations. For example, more than a quarter of the people asked were unable to answer intelligently this question included in an Elmo Roper *Fortune* poll late in 1946: “Suppose you had been acting as a referee in labor-management disputes during the past three months; do you think your decisions would probably have been more often in favor of labor’s side or more often in favor of management’s side?”

The major reason for the American public's ignorance of matters concerning labor is its lack of factual information. The public receives its impressions of unions mainly from newspaper headlines or radio broadcasts, usually just before or in the midst of a time of controversy. Neither a union nor a management point of view expressed during controversy helps to clarify the issue; on the contrary, it merely intensifies existing attitudes. People are more receptive to facts when issues are not superheated by emotional pressures.

Most people, I should say, do not know that unions have increased purchasing power and profits as well as wages and that they have been responsible for adjustments in our industrial system that have raised our standards of living. The public has little idea of what an extension of unionism might mean to our whole economy. It does not know what the advantages of unions are to the general society. It is unaware of what can be learned from the experiences of other countries. The public really does not know why some unions engage in harmful practices and others not. It has little knowledge of how the democratic process operates within unions.

The 1944 CIO constitution states that the unions' objectives are to find "means to establish peaceful relations with their employers . . . to protect and extend our democratic institutions and civil rights and liberties and thus to perpetuate the cherished tradition of our democracy." These are aims that all Americans can and will support—if they know the facts on which to base their judgments. They will not have the facts unless someone makes a planned campaign to provide them. Progressive unions are in a position to do so. They can give the public the following kinds of information about unions:

1. *What is a union? How does it function?*

Give the basic story of union organization, its history and development. Explain the structure and internal government of unions; the different kinds of unions, industrial and craft; local, national, and international; affiliated and unaffiliated. Explain clearly the facts about jurisdiction, the methods by which officers are chosen, and their duties, membership dues, and disposition of union finances.

2. *What are the educational and welfare activities of unions?*

Cover the story of the labor press and its function. Publicize the educational activities and benefit programs of unions, such as vocational training, apprenticeship methods, labor banking, insurance, and the like.

3. *What are the facts about collective bargaining?*

Explain this little-understood term; tell what the process actually is, what takes place, and how agreements are reached.

4. *What are the facts about labor disputes in general?*

How do they arise? What are the principal reasons for disputes? Are there as many as the public has been led to believe?

5. *What do the words mean?*

No small part of the campaign would be to define many of the terms commonly used in labor-management discussions, but only vaguely understood by the public. A whole vocabulary needs translating. Only a small percentage of the public knows the distinction of meanings among wages, wage awards, wage practices, wage differentials, and wage stabilization; work load, work restriction, and work sharing; the closed shop, the union shop, and the open shop.

My second proposal is that the unions educate the employer on the subject of unions and human relations. It can teach the employer by the same methods it uses with the public.

Today, while it is generally recognized that more employers than formerly are ready to accept their social responsibility, this is by no means true of all of them, as shown by the *Fortune* poll quoted in the preceding chapter. As also pointed out in that chapter, employers must realize that industry is not merely "business," it is a social institution as well. Industrial management requires skill in group relations. In the common interest, unions should help teach management how to work intelligently with labor.

Some difficulty in industry is caused by the Victorian attitudes of certain employers, who want to recapture the hold on workers they feel they have lost because of workers' loyalty to unions. They resent and fear unions. They fail to educate their company officials on how to work with people. Some do not understand that the worker, as

Philip Murray put it so succinctly, is faced with “the primary problem of earning a living.”

But the worker also wants more than just a job, and many employers do not yet realize this. Elmo Roper showed, by authoritative polling some years ago, “that in the order of their importance to him, the Average American wants a sense of security, an opportunity to advance, to be treated like a human being rather than as a number on the payroll, a sense of human dignity that comes from feeling that his work is useful to society as a whole.” These preferences have been confirmed by more recent polls. About half of the persons queried said they would pick a job that pays quite a low income, but which they were sure of keeping. About one-quarter said they wanted a job that pays a good income, but which they have a fifty-fifty chance of losing. Still fewer said they preferred a job that pays an extremely high income if you make the grade, but in which you lose almost everything if you don’t.

Disruptions in labor-management relations arise from many reasons other than wage disputes. They arise from a continuous sense of insecurity, from real or apparent managerial unfairness in adjusting contractual relations, from the harmful effects of assembly-line work, and from work and pay scales planned on an individual instead of a group basis.

In many cases, these causes of workers dissatisfaction stem directly from preconceived employer attitudes. Educational directors of a great union can help to alter these attitudes by means of an educational program aimed at the employer. They might:

1. Educate employers to the place of unions in our system.
2. Acquaint employers with the data on human relations that have been gathered by universities, labor unions, foundations, and such groups as the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, the Society for the Advancement of Management, and the American Academy of Political and Social Science.
3. Persuade employers to stimulate further research by industrial relations schools such as those at Cornell, Princeton, and Harvard.
4. Encourage employers to carry on technological research to improve working conditions.
5. Help management to develop new approaches to the industrial relations problem. Stabilized employment, which some organizations have found



enormously beneficial, is an example.

6. Point up the importance of intelligent, honest, unbiased industrial relations personnel.

7. Urge management to encourage responsible leadership among the unions.

8. Urge employers to support housing projects, minimum-wage legislation, social security, and other programs to strengthen democracy.

I know the idea of educational efforts aimed at management is not new. It has been tried, sometimes with decidedly negative results. Unions have had disillusioning experiences in their attempts to persuade management to consider the union point of view, and they may feel that anyone who suggests educating management is probably starry-eyed. Management's principal fear is that if it allows labor the right to advise, labor will somehow gain complete control. Efforts to dispel this belief cannot succeed overnight; but just as the displacement of one log can break up a log jam, so the winning over of one man may win over others.

The educational process, continually and persistently carried on, leads to new points of view. There are innumerable ways of reaching the attention of employers. Unions can arrange for speaking engagements before employer groups, like the Lions and the Rotary clubs. Radio talks and speeches at public meetings will carry the message. People can be educated by word of mouth in conversation. A thought clearly expressed has a way of starting a chain reaction. Unions can reach employers by the printed word—by sending clear, factual stories to newspapers and other publications, by advertisements, pamphlets, and broadsides, by using all the communications media. Intelligently written letters addressed to top management will be read. Talks by union executives to community groups reported in the newspapers will get attention. Material prepared for special groups in the community, such as women's clubs, lawyers, and the clergy, will indirectly affect the businessman. Unions can enlist the support of colleges, foundations, progressive employers, consumer and other groups. No approach should be overlooked in carrying forward the program. Workers have a duty to the common good to help educate one of the most potent groups in America—management.

The third activity I propose is to educate union members in economics. Many reliable polls have proved the need of such education. For example, recent surveys of cross-sections of factory workers by the magazine *Factory Management* revealed that about one-third of the workers queried had no opinion on whether the prices a company charges for its products are too high, not high enough, or about right. About one-third had no opinion on their bosses' pay. About half had no opinion on whether dividends were too high or too low. More than half had no opinion as to which top union leader is the most effective in getting better wages, hours, and working conditions.

Few people, workers included, know much about the technical problems of business finance. Without such knowledge the worker is handicapped in bargaining. If, however, he understands management's problems, he can bargain on a realistic basis. Some well-informed unions actually come to the aid of management when it is in financial difficulties, as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have done, because they know that such assistance directly benefits everyone dependent on the industry involved. Unions such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have been able to take drastic steps of this kind only because their membership has been educated in the value of mutual assistance. This education had been accomplished over a long period of years by the union itself. What the Amalgamated does, other unions can do.

Walter Reuther has said that "the test of democratic trade unionism in a democratic society must be its willingness to lead the fight for the welfare of the whole community." Management, of course, has the same obligation. Organized labor can help educate both management and workers to a realization of this obligation. Such education has one basic purpose: to create understanding, so that management and labor may work together effectively and avoid clashes. And this co-operation must come, for our system cannot stand continuous warfare.

## ***How American Business Can Sell the American Way of Life to the American People***

*“FOR generations,” says E. B. Hinckley, president of the Babson Institute of Business Administration, “teachers have been trying to prepare young people for business success. For generations, also, businessmen have been unhappy about the preparation given young people for business.” To correct this situation, in 1947 the Babson Institute convened the First Annual Conference of Businessmen and Educators in an effort to narrow the gap between them. Since then conferences have been held every year, attended by about one thousand to twelve hundred persons.*

*According to Everett W. Stephens, director of the conference, the attendance is rather evenly divided between educators and businessmen. The educators are composed for the most part of public school superintendents, college presidents and deans, and heads of both public and private schools. The businessmen consist of a small group of business owners and a larger group of company presidents, treasurers, secretaries, general management, and other line management. There is also a sprinkling of government and labor representatives.*

*The first annual conference was devoted to the subject, “What Business and Industry Expect of the Schools and Colleges.” The second conference theme was “Analyzing Labor-Management Problems.” The third conference, held in 1949, was concerned with “Freedom, Education and Business.” The fourth conference, held at Babson Park, Massachusetts, on October 13, 1950, and sponsored by the Institute, the New England Council, the Smaller Business Association of New England and Associated Industries, was devoted to a theme of the widest national interest.*

*In inviting me to address this conference, Mr. Stephens said: “With so many subversive activities gnawing at our democratic institutions today, we felt that our greatest contribution this year would be along the lines of Revitalizing Democracy: A Plan of Action.” And he*

*suggested that I take for my subject the topic of how business can sell the American way of life to Americans. I accepted his invitation. A condensation of the talk, as delivered at the Babson Institute conference in the autumn of 1950, appears below.*

*Business leaders had recently complained of industry's failure to sell itself to the public despite vast expenditures for that purpose. The trouble is that business is following an antiquated pattern in identifying the American way of life only with machinery and products, instead of primarily with the human and social needs of the American people. Therefore I suggested a five-point program designed to aid American business in selling the American way of life to the American people.*

American business has spent fabulous sums of money to sell "the American way of life" to the American people since 1935. Quite naturally, the question arises: "Has American business succeeded; and if not, how can it do so?" Two typical quotations reflect the common thought that—to put it mildly—business has not yet been successful in this task.

One, from Vincent C. Ross, vice-president and treasurer of Prentice-Hall, Inc., book publishers, appeared in the *New York Times* under the headline, "Industry Urged to Sell Itself." Mr. Ross was quoted as saying: "American business has failed dismally in getting across to the rank and file of its employees that they have anything to gain from our wonderful free-enterprise system. The major trouble in the past has been that we as business executives have been talking to ourselves. We have failed to bring our thinking down to the level where it can be understood by those who need it most, and it is not too late if we would only get busy and sell ourselves."

And *Fortune*, in its September, 1950, issue, made this comment: "The free enterprise campaign is shaping up as one of the most intensive sales jobs in the history of industry—in fact, it is fast becoming very much of an industry in itself. This year it will probably account for a least one hundred million dollars of industry's advertising budget and an unknown but hefty share of its employee-relationships expenditures. More to the point, it is absorbing more

and more of the energies expended by the top men in U. S. management.”

*How can American business successfully sell the American way of life to the American public?*

As a basis for our common understanding, we must now define our terms. “American business,” “American way of life,” and “American people” are abstract terms. S. I. Hayakawa in his notable book on semantics, *Language in Action*, has shown us how powerful the impact of abstract terms can be and how meaningless.

What *exactly* do we mean by “American business”? Business is certainly the most potent single activity in American society, the major source of our taxes and our economic well-being. In the United States today, six million enterprises in agriculture and about three million unincorporated concerns outside of agriculture attest to this fact. Their owners are businessmen. But we do not mean them when we ask whether American business is succeeding in selling the American way of life to the American people.

A better definition for this discussion, it seems to me, is to restrict the term “American business” to corporations. Owned by a relatively small number of people—some six or seven million shareholders—corporations produce roughly one-half of our total national income and 57 per cent of that part of the national income produced by private enterprise. They pay about 64 per cent of all wages and salaries paid in the United States, and seventy-five per cent of all wages and salaries paid in private industry. They employ about forty-five per cent of all gainfully employed persons in the United States and about two-thirds of all employees in private industry. Corporations vary in size, policy, and activities, but they have many interests in common. They are organized into associations of one kind or another. They are the articulate segment of American business. It is they who have been concerned mainly with selling the American way of life to the American people. In this discussion, we shall define American business to mean American corporations.

The “American way of life,” another umbrella term, also requires definition. Which of its many facets do we mean? The way of life in Newport villas or in Chicago slums? Life in a Park Avenue

penthouse or in the workingmen's quarters in Pittsburgh? If we mean all the ways of life in the United States today, what common denominators may be called *the* American way of life?

Certainly one common denominator is the high level of physical comfort, thanks to our technological achievement. In a major way, America means to us, and to the rest of the world, nationwide ownership of automobiles, telephones, and vacuum cleaners; nationwide enjoyment of movies, the radio, and sports.

But the American way of life is more than the physical living standards our tremendous productive plant gives us. The basic elements of the American way of life are certain human and social values held to be self-evident since they were first proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence—values that we, the people of the United States, have developed in the past century and three-quarters. These basic elements have been emphasized and put into legislation by national heroes like Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. They are embodied in our folklore and laws, expounded by our great thinkers and poets.

Whatever else an American, *any* American, may mean by the American way of life, he always also means the importance and dignity of the individual as opposed to the supremacy of the state. He means everyone's right to opportunity in work and education; the right to freedom, property, orderly justice, and security guaranteed by the federal Constitution and the Bill of Rights. All this equates the American way of life with the good life, the full life, the right to a real life.

However, business in its attempts to sell the American way of life to the American people has identified the American way principally with technology, machinery, and material living standards. Recently, *Newsweek* magazine carried a full-page advertisement by a manufacturer captioned, "Tools . . . not Talk . . . improve the standard of living." This is typical of antiquated business thinking. It stresses tools to the exclusion of other essential factors. To be sure, the material achievements of American business are something of which we are all proud—and justly so. With only 7 per cent of the world's population, the United States turns out 50 per cent of the world's industrial products. Technologically, American business produces the

most and best products, and from this fact many businessmen draw an erroneous conclusion. They reason as follows: Business has manufactured the materials of the American way of life. Therefore, the American way of life is soap, tooth paste, automobiles, or breakfast food and can be sold like them.

This is what business has been trying to do since 1935 when it began to recover its voice after the depression. The National Association of Manufacturers and similar groups have been plugging this concept of the American way of life in press, radio, magazines, billboards, and other mass media under such slogans as "What helps business helps you," and "Support free enterprise." Business expected this verbal hocus-pocus to work magic.

But it is obvious that this campaign of business to sell its notion of the American way of life has not been successful. Much authoritative evidence comes even from business leaders. Let me call your attention, for example, to the following significant statement by Frank Abrams, chairman of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey: "It always seems rather sad to me that we of the industrial and business world deceive ourselves that we can make friends and influence people through such things as paid newspaper advertising, pamphlets, and billboards. Some of these may help under certain conditions, but when it becomes the main channel of our effort, I think it is almost an insult to the intelligence of the average reader."

Another indication of failure is found in the reaction of the very people the campaign is intended to reach. That there is dissatisfaction is evidenced by the large followings that lunatic-fringe leaders like Dr. Townsend and Huey Long had not so long ago. It is even more seriously evidenced by what labor and the liberal groups of our society think. While business has equated the American way with tools, technology, and production, these sectors of the public have equated it with the social aspects of living, economic security, psychological security, status, and self-assertion.

Take Walter Reuther, for instance. As president of the United Automobile Workers, he speaks for a million American employees and their families (five million people, let us say), all representative of the people business has been trying to reach. Speaking of the American way of life, Mr. Reuther has said: "We are still far from the

goal we seek. Insecurity still haunts millions. Inadequate housing poisons the wells of family life in vast numbers of cases. Inadequate schooling handicaps a great segment of our people, and the fear of sickness and old age still clutches the hearts of many if not most of our fellow citizens. Until we solve all these problems, and quiet all these fears, our people will not be truly free.”

By telling us what large segments of the population think the American way of life is, men like Mr. Reuther help us understand why business has been unable to sell its definition. Consider—to take another example—this statement that Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, representing another important sector of American life, made recently at a Harvard Law School forum: “We in America still have almost 10,000,000 families or about one-quarter of our population trying to get along on less than \$2,000 a year.” He also pointed out that “millions of families live on tiny, worn-out farms, eking out a bare subsistence.”

Business has handled the sale of the American way of life as if it were only a communications process. Bound by the tyranny of words, by an almost primitive belief in their magic, business has relied chiefly on words and pictures, even when these did not at all convey what was intended. The emphasis on words in these attempts at persuasion is not in accord with the finding of the modern social sciences. Again I emphasize what I have stated repeatedly throughout this book, research has confirmed what men have always known intuitively, that in persuasion, actions speak louder than words. Psychology tells us that people believe mainly what they want to believe. Words aimed at converting them to a belief mainly reinforce their existing beliefs. Words are effective in persuasion only when they are already acceptable to the audience.

The communication techniques of business in selling the American way have been poor because they have been based on the premise that words as words would create acceptance. Business has not been able to sell its definition of the American way of life to the American people because this definition did not meet the needs, hopes, and desires of the American public. It did not match their notion of the American way of life, and what they want to get from it. Today three out of every four people who work in the United States



are on someone else's payroll, and since they are powerful determinants in their own destiny, they have denied, in political and other action, this definition of the American way as plugged by business.

The problem is one of realities—of the meaning of the American way to the American people. If American business wants to sell the American way of life to the public, a complete reorientation of thought and action is needed. This would place emphasis not alone on factories, machinery, markets, and products, but on the social and human needs of the people as well. This is what Dean Donald K. David of the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration undoubtedly had in mind when he said recently: "Business must seek proper balance. Business leaders must assume the responsibility for increasing *all the human satisfactions* of groups with which they are associated."

When our business structure, with its producing machinery, satisfies these social needs of workers and of other citizens, our problem of selling will be solved. Eugene Holman, president of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, recently supported this thesis when he said: "Ways must be found to give the individual worker at every rank a sense of accomplishment, a feeling of personal worth, a realization of the true importance to his efforts to the broad scheme. The individual employee wants not only fair pay and reasonable security but just dealings, respect, and a feeling of accomplishment. He wants, too, the opportunity to advance in his chosen career and to build a fuller life for his family."

These basic American values are instilled into American boys and girls by their whole culture pattern—family, school, printed word, movies, radio, and television—and by their cultural heritage. If the values promised and the hopes raised are not fulfilled in the individual's relations with the economic part of our culture, he will suffer frustration. Maladjustment, as I have already made clear, leads to frustration, and frustration leads to aggression which may take the form of escape, buck-passing, or revolution.

Since World War I, people throughout the world have struggled to fulfill the needs and desires represented by the true meaning of the American way of life. The extension of democracy, the speeding up

of communication, and the rise of powerful trade unions have provided effective stimulation of these wishes. More and more people have tried to obtain more and more economic and psychological security while maintaining their liberty. When they have failed to get what they wanted from private business, they have turned to government for the satisfaction of their needs. Unscrupulous political leaders abroad have taken advantage of this situation in times of stress. They have promised the people liberty *and* security, and given them nazism, facism, or communism instead. Where private industry has failed to satisfy peoples' needs, right or left movements toward state centralization have developed.

In the United States, too, people will either get their basic social and personal satisfaction from our private business system, where most workers are employed, or they will turn for satisfaction to government. Some satisfactions, of course, only government can give. Governmental activity aids education, health, child welfare, old age, and unemployment. It aids industry with a protective tariff, farmers with subsidies, employees with wage and hour laws. But if we are not to move to state capitalism of the right or the left, if we are to maintain our mixed economy—predominantly competitive—we must have freedom from excessive governmental restriction and control.

The problem is one of balance. Ralph Flanders, United States senator from Vermont, recently put it this way: "Our objective should be the material prosperity of the American citizen and the preservation of his freedom."

The conviction that the individual's freedom and security can rest on government and business, each performing its function, is shared by liberals like A. A. Berle, Jr., former assistant secretary of state, and co-author of a well-known book on corporations. Mr. Berle has said: "In a country capable of producing and earning a national income of two hundred and forty billions, you can have both private life and a government system that will make the American economy take care of the American people through adequate production and also, with a moderate approximation to horse sense and justice."

If we can achieve such recognition of human needs by business, we need not fear communism or Communists. This was recently

emphasized by Murray Shields, is vice-president of the Bank of the Manhattan Company, when he said: "There is impressive strength in the fact that our economic system provides a far higher standard of living for our people than any Communist nation ever dared to hope for; that our way of life is one of reward rather than penalties, of freedom rather than fear, of peace rather than war, and of human dignity rather than submersion in a soulless state, and that our political system guarantees more freedom than any other ever devised."

All these statements indicate that enlightened business leaders are supporting a new, dynamic concept of their role in American society. This may lead to a change in the public relations of business, based on the general acceptance by business of all its social responsibilities.

"The economic rights of man cannot be escaped," Russell Davenport said recently. "If, therefore, businessmen insist on separating themselves from the field of right to concern themselves only with the field of markets, the only answer democratic society can reach is that of state socialism."

Charles E. Wilson, president of General Motors, affirmed this trend of the times when he said: "It is increasingly clear that our large industrial corporations are not merely economic institutions but that they have social responsibilities and problems as well—that business decisions and policies must be adopted not only in the light of short- and long-term economic factors but also with due recognition of pertinent social values and possible social reactions."

A most striking example of the change in the climate of business opinion is the published report of the trustees of the Ford Foundation, America's largest foundation. The report states: "Basic to human welfare is general acceptance of the dignity of man. This rests on the conviction that man is endowed with certain unalienable rights and must be regarded as an end in himself, not as a cog in the mechanisms of society or a mere means to some social end." After emphasizing the importance of the rule of law, justice, self-government, and the Bill of Rights, the Ford Foundation goes on to assert: "Human welfare requires that power at all levels and in all

forms—political, economic, or social—be exercised with the full sense of social responsibility and the general good.”

Not long ago a distinguished businessman said that the corporation’s responsibilities are to be a productive and creative force in society, continually seeking better ways of making industrial work satisfying and rewarding, and to undertake on its own account to aid others to develop sound economic thought. This is sound thinking, but we must go further than that.

In summing up, I should like to recommend a program for American business to sell the American way of life to the American people which I believe meets today’s requirements. This program embraces activities by which business can extend satisfactions of the social needs of men. It covers five points:

1. the extension of employees’ economic security;
2. the extension of employees’ psychological security;
3. the extension of activities giving greater self-respect and status to the individual employee;
4. activities aimed at opportunities for advancement for employees and their children;
5. active participation by American business in the life and development of the community.

Economic security can be extended to provide against loss from illness, disease, old age, death, depression, unemployment and the loss of earning power. Government has already made some provisions along those lines. Private industry can further extend them in plans for stabilizing employment (like the Procter and Gamble plan), for pensions, health and safety programs, hospitalization, accident insurance, maternity care, and paid vacations, as well as thrift and retirement plans for all ranks, with necessary flexibility to meet changing price levels. The pension plans provided by the five-year contracts recently granted by the motor companies have done more to build good will for American business and to sell the American way of life than the millions spent on advertising the American way. The Sears, Roebuck pension fund and the International Business Machines Corporation retirement plans are models of sound action.

American business can increase the employee's psychological security by developing uniform programs for treatment of employees and executives, by avoiding discrimination because of race, creed, or color. Psychological security is based partly on economic security. Elmo Roper has found that ten times more workers would rather have steady employment than higher pay, and twenty-five times more workers would rather have steady employment than shorter hours.

Employees can be given a feeling of self-respect and status by good working conditions, by collective bargaining, by foremen who take part in intelligent, two-way communication with workers. Employees can be given opportunities to advance themselves by job-training courses within the company, by general employee education and by training schools. Business also can encourage education of employees' children.

Finally, American business can greatly strengthen its relations with the American people by playing a more active and creative role in the community. People live and work in communities, the grass roots of our society. America's cultural climate, its social and political action, stems from the community. This in turn conditions our whole social pattern. The community concerns itself with the matters that basically affect the lives of its citizens—health, housing, education, safety, public welfare, social services, and so on. So far, the major effort of business in the community has been to be a good neighbor. It has, for instance, carried out what it felt was its obligation by contributing to the Community Chest and other welfare groups.

The new orientation demands that the relations of business to the community be broader and more dynamic. To what it does now, business can add community leadership in a dynamic way, not by superimposed power, but by engineering of consent, by persuasion and suggestion to insure that the community will reach its highest goals in health, housing, education, safety, public welfare, and other fields. What helps the community helps business.

In seeking to achieve these goals, business should make it clear that it is concerned not only with production, markets, and profits, but also with human rights and aspirations. Progressive companies individually have already demonstrated that American business can

sell the American way of life to their publics. It is only by the extension of this process in the broadest possible ways, by the voluntary action of all American business, that we shall achieve the goal of a stable advancing economy, with liberty and security for all within the framework of the American way of life.

## ***Selected List of Readings in Public Relations***

*For the use of those readers who wish to make a further study of public relations in its many varied phases, the author has compiled this list of readings which he believes will be helpful to both the professional and the lay reader. The titles begin with Aristotle and continue down to the current issue of Fortune, indicating that the study and the art of public relations are as old as mankind itself and as modern as today's magazines.*

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*Advertising Age*. Chicago, Advertising Publications, Inc. Weekly.

*American Journal of Psychology*, The. Austin, University of Texas Department of Psychology. Quarterly.

*American Journal of Sociology*. Chicago, University of Chicago. Bimonthly.

*American Political Science Review*. Durham, N. C., Duke University. Quarterly.

*American Psychologist*. Washington, American Psychological Association. Monthly.

*American Sociological Review*. New York, American Sociological Society, New York University. Bi-monthly.

*Business Week*. New York, McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. Weekly.

*Channels*. News letter. New York, National Publicity Council for Health and Welfare Services, Inc. Semi-monthly.

*Clearinghouse Bulletin*. Chicago, Society for Applied Anthropology, Clearinghouse for Research in Human Organization. Quarterly.

*College Public Relations Quarterly*. State College, Pa., American College Public Relations Association.

*Editor and Publisher*. New York, The Editor and Publisher Company, Inc. Weekly.

*ETC: Review of General Semantics*. Chicago, International Society for General Semantics. Quarterly.

*Fortune*. New York, Time, Inc. Monthly.

*Human Relations*. London, Tavistock Publications, Ltd. Quarterly.

*Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology.* Washington, American Psychological Association. Quarterly.

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*Journal of Social Issues, The.* New York, The Association Press, for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, a Division of the American Psychological Association. Quarterly.

*Journal of the Institute of Public Relations.* London, Institute of Public Relations. Monthly.

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*Printers' Ink.* New York, Printers' Ink Publishing Company. Weekly.

*Public Opinion Quarterly.* Princeton, School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University.

*Public Relations Journal.* New York, The Public Relations Society of America, Inc. Monthly.

*Scientific Monthly.* Washington, American Association for the Advancement of Science. Monthly.

# Notes

## Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup> Originally published in the *Bulletin* of the Business Historical Society, Inc. (Boston), for October, 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Boston, Bellman Publishing Company, Inc., 1948.

## Chapter 5

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by permission of the publishers, Harcourt, Brace and Company.

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by permission of the publishers, Harcourt, Brace and Company.

## Chapter 7

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Josephson, *The Robber Barons*, 187.

## Chapter 8

<sup>1</sup> Research has failed to uncover the name of the firm.

<sup>2</sup> See bibliography.

## Chapter 14

<sup>1</sup> *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. CCL (March, 1947), 113–20.

## Chapter 17

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Edward L. Bernays, “America looks at Nursing—A Summation,” *American Journal of Nursing*, Vol. XLVI, No. 9 (September, 1946), 590–92, by permission of the *American Journal of Nursing*.

## Chapter 18

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Edward L. Bernays “A Better Deal for Nurses,” *American Journal of Nursing*, Vol. XLVII, No. 11 (November, 1947), 721–22, by permission of the *American Journal of Nursing*.

## Chapter 23

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Edward L. Bernays, “Advertising Is Behind the Times—Culturally,” *Printers’ Ink*, March 30, 1951, by permission of the publishers. Copyright 1951 by Printers’ Ink Pub. Co., Inc.

## Chapter 24

<sup>1</sup> Edward L. Bernays, “Preview of American Public Opinion,” *The American Mercury*, March, 1944. Adapted by permission of *The American Mercury*.

## Chapter 27

<sup>1</sup> *General Education in a Free Society*, report by the Committee on the objectives of a General Education in a Free Society (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1945).

<sup>2</sup> *Higher Education for American Democracy*, report of the President’s Commission on Higher Education (New York, Harper’s, 1948).

## Chapter 30

<sup>1</sup> Adapted by permission of *The New Leader*.

## Chapter 31

<sup>1</sup> Printed as “Human Relations—The way to Labor-Management Adjustment,” Pennsylvania State College *Bulletin* XLI, No. 7 (February 14, 1947), 15–22.

<sup>1</sup> In 1949, 50,500,000 man-days were lost by strikes; and in 1950, only 38,800,000.

# ***Index***

Page numbers refer to the print edition but are hyperlinked to the appropriate location in the e-book.

Abolitionists: [41–43](#), [44](#)

Abrams, Frank: [339](#)

Ackerman, Carl: [106](#)

*Acta Diurna*: [16](#)

Activities, public relations: fields of, [2](#), [3](#); acceptance of, [5](#); of industry, [101–102](#); action blueprint for, [169–80](#); aimed at general public, [175](#); aimed at financial public, [176–77](#); aimed at group leaders, [177–78](#)

Adams, Samuel Hopkins: [30–32](#), [33](#), [60](#)

Advertising: first newspaper, [21](#); in penny press, [38](#), [47](#); disguised as news, [47–48](#); increase in newspaper, [60](#); institutional, [104](#); lag in field of, [246–52](#); definition of, [247](#)

*Advertising Age*: [138](#)

Age of Enlightenment: [22–23](#)

Agriculture, Department of (U.S.): [153](#)

Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation: [203](#)

Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union: [150](#), [334](#)

America, development of public relations in: [27–125](#)

American Academy of Political and Social Sciences: [146](#), [157](#), [332](#)

American Alliance for Labor and Democracy: [75](#)

American Association for the Advancement of Science: [235](#)

American Association of College News Bureaus: [139](#)

American Bankers Association: [89](#), [112](#)

American College Public Relations Association: [139](#), [144](#), [283](#)

American Council on Public Relations: [139](#)

American Federation of Labor: [54](#), [57](#), [150](#), [151](#), [213](#), [318](#)

American Institute of Banking: [145](#)

American Institute of Public Opinion: [107](#), [275](#), [319](#), [321](#), [323](#)

American Iron and Steel Institute: [105](#), [235](#)

*American Journal of Nursing*: [188](#)

*American Journal of Psychology*: [246](#)

*American Journal of Sociology*: [95](#)

*American Language* (Mencken): [93](#)

American Legion: [282](#)

American Management Association: [235](#) [324](#)

American Manufacturers Export Association: [90](#)

American Medical Association: [235](#)

*American Mercury*: 107, 148, 253  
American Newspaper Publishers Association: 61, 88, 89, 94, 147, 185, 235  
American Nurses Association: 187–88, 194  
*American Past* (Butterfield): 52  
*American Peace Advocate in 1834*: 39  
American Peace Society: 39  
American Petroleum Institute: 88  
American Public Relations Association: 139  
American Red Cross: see Red Cross  
American Revolution: 27–34  
American Society for the Promotion of Temperance: 39  
American Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues: 144  
American Society of Newspaper Editors: 91  
American Sociological Society: 324  
American Telephone and Telegraph Company: 70, 105, 112  
American way of life: 335–45  
*American Weekly Mercury*: 29  
*Americana* (Mencken): 93  
Anglo-American co-operation: 301–307  
*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*: 110, 157  
*Approaches to Personality* (Murphy and Jensen): 250  
Armour and Company: 70, 203  
Armour, Philip: 58  
Associated Industries: 336  
Associated Press: 79, 83  
Association of American Railroads: 112  
Association of Municipal Public Relations Officers: 140  
Association of National Advertisers: 104  
Association of Optical Practitioners: 140  
Atlantic Charter: 115  
*Atlantic Migration, The, 1607–1860* (Hansen): 28  
*Atlantic Monthly*: 55, 73, 107, 148  
Atlantic Pact: 301  
Attitude polls: 260–68  
Ayer, N. W., and Son, Inc.: 89, 104, 162

Babson Institute of Business Administration: 335–36  
Babson, Roger: 78  
Babylonia, public relations in: 13  
Baer, George F.: 64, 68, 69  
Bailey, G.: 41  
Bailey, T. A.: 271  
Baker, Ray Stannard: 64, 69

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad: 40  
Banking institution, public relations blueprint for a: 169–80  
Bank of America: 106  
Bank of the Manhattan Company: 342  
Barnum, Phineas T.: 38–39, 58  
Barry, David S.: 66  
Barton, Bruce: 107  
Batten, H. A.: 104  
Bauer, Professor Wilhelm: 11  
Bausch and Lomb Optical Company: 203  
Beech-Nut Packing Company: 81–82  
*Behavior of Crowds, The* (Martin): 141  
Bell Telephone System: 70  
Bellamy, Edward: 55  
Bennett, James Gordon: 44, 47  
Bercovici, Rion: 149  
Berle, A. A., Jr.: 342  
Bernays Foundation Fellowship in Applied Social Science: 149  
Bethlehem Steel Company: 70  
Bibliographies on public relations: 140–41, 142, 346  
Bidwell, Percy W.: 74  
Big Five: 311, 312, 313  
Bill of Rights: 7, 8, 18, 22, 27, 36, 158, 258, 338, 343  
*Biography Index*: 148  
Bloomfield, Daniel: 107  
Bluers Society: 140  
*Book of Knowledge Annual*: 242  
*Book Review Digest*: 141  
Books on public relations: 142–43, 149  
Boston Conference on Distribution: 107  
*Boston News Letter*: 29  
Bowker, R. W.: 142  
Bowles, Samuel: 64  
Bradford, Andrew: 29  
Brewing industry: 108  
Brieux, Eugène: 72  
British Rayon Federation: 140  
*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*: 150  
Brooks, John Graham: 65  
Bryan, William Jennings: 57, 67  
Bryce, Lord: 55  
Bryce Report on German atrocities: 76  
Budget, Bureau of the (U.S.): 152



Buell, K. L.: [93](#), [141](#)  
*Building a Popular Movement, a Case Study of the Public Relations of the Boy Scouts of America* (Levy): [142–43](#)  
*Build-Up Boys, The* (Kirk): [149](#)  
Burlington Mills Corporation: [203](#)  
*Business Executives and Corporation Encyclopedia*: [203](#)  
*Business Finds Its Voice: Management's Effort to Sell the Business Idea to the Public* (Walker and Sklar): [108](#)  
*Business Literature*: [142](#)  
*Business Week*: [104](#), [148](#)  
Butler, Sir Geoffrey: [76](#)  
Butt, Major Archie: [67](#)  
Butterick Company, Inc., The: [89](#)

Cabinet, U.S., proposal for Secretary of Public Relations in: [291–92](#)  
Calder, Sterling: [85](#)  
Calkins, Earnest Elmo: [97](#)  
Cantril, Dr. Hadley: [265](#)  
Capitalism: [51](#)  
Carnegie, Andrew: [51](#), [56](#), [58](#)  
Carnegie Foundation: [143](#)  
Carpenter, Sam: [61](#)  
Cartier, Inc.: [105](#)  
Casablanca Conference: [115](#)  
Casey, Ralph D.: [142](#), [146](#)  
Celotex Corporation: [203](#)  
Censorship, abolition of: [22](#)  
Census, Bureau of (U.S.): [273](#)  
*Cent, The* (Philadelphia newspaper): [37](#)  
Central Committee for National Patriotic Organization: [76](#)  
Chandler, Bob: [85](#)  
*Channels*: [144](#)  
Character of public relations men: [126–28](#)  
Chase, Stuart: [65](#), [249](#), [317](#)  
Cheney Brothers: [89](#)  
Chester, Colby: [105](#)  
*Chicago Tribune*: [93](#)  
Childs, Harwood L.: [109](#), [141](#), [144](#)  
Chrysler Corporation: [203](#)  
Chrysler, Walter: [113](#)  
Churchill, Winston S.: [115](#), [294](#)  
Circus: [37–38](#), [58](#)  
Civil War: [36](#), [43–44](#), [49](#)

Clarey, Northop: 105  
Clippings: 180  
Clough, Reginald: 146  
*College Course in Reporting for Beginners, A* (MacDougall): 109  
College of Propaganda: 20  
Colleges, public relations for: 283–90  
*Collier's* (magazine): 64, 205  
Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.: 85, 105, 150  
*Columbia Encyclopedia*: 147  
Committee on Public Information: 30, 72, 73–75, 78, 90, 293, 297  
Committee on Publicity Methods of the National Conference of Social Work: 140  
*Common Sense*: 32  
Communist International: 76  
Communist Manifesto: 25, 76  
Communist party, public relations techniques of: 25  
Company magazines: see House organs  
Competition: 7, 8, 50  
Conference of Businessmen and Educators: 335  
Conference of School Administrators and Supervisors: 269  
Congress of Industrial Organizations: 150, 151, 213, 318, 330  
Congress, U.S.: first eight-hour-day law passed by, 54; trusts investigated by, 56  
*Congressional Directory*: 162  
Consciousness of public relations: 7  
Consent, engineering of: 157–68  
Constitution, U.S.: 18, 27, 40, 42, 160, 258, 274, 338  
Consumer's Committee of Women Opposed to American Valuation: 81  
*Contact* (periodical): 91, 144  
Contests: 84  
Conventions: 179, 182  
Cooke, Jay: 44–46  
Coolidge, Calvin: 77, 84  
Corruption: 55, 64  
Corwin, Margaret T.: 286  
*Cosmopolitan* (magazine): 64  
Council on Foreign Affairs: 138  
Council on Public Opinion: 138  
Council on Retail Distribution: 111  
Counsel, public relations: 3, 79, 118; definition, 4–5, 94; sanctions for, 6; obligations to the public, 83; function, 123  
Counter-propaganda: 114  
Counter-Reformation: 20  
*Courant* (Hartford, Conn., newspaper): 61  
*Courier of Egypt, The* (newspaper): 24

Courses, public relations: [84](#), [108–109](#), [135](#), [144–46](#)

CPI: see Committee on Public Information

Craven, Thomas: [242](#)

Creel, George: [71](#), [72](#), [74](#), [75](#), [90](#)

Crossley, Archibald: [107](#)

*Crowd, The* (LeBon): [141](#)

Crowell, Merle: [105](#)

*Crystallizing Public Opinion* (Bernays): [82–83](#)

*Current Controversy*: [291](#)

Curtis Publishing Company: [150](#)

*Daily Newspaper in America, The* (Lee): [28](#)

Dartmouth College: [324](#)

Davenport, Russell: [123](#), [343](#)

David, Donald K.: [341](#)

Davidson, Carter: [284](#)

Davidson, Jo: [85](#)

Davidson, Philip: [33](#)

Davis, J. H.: [287](#)

Davis, Vernon M.: [91](#)

Day, C. H.: [58](#)

Day, Edmund Ezra: [285](#)

Declaration of Independence: [33–34](#), [274](#), [338](#)

Declaration of the Rights of Man: [23](#)

Defense, Department of (U.S.): [153](#)

Democracy: [9](#), [10](#), [26](#), [31](#), [36](#), [63](#), [76](#), [90](#), [113](#), [114](#), [115](#), [157](#), [168](#), [269](#), [270](#), [292](#), [295](#), [303](#)

Depew, Chauncey: [52](#)

Depression: [99](#), [100](#), [101](#), [102](#), [113](#), [115](#), [116](#)

De Tocqueville, Alexis: [38](#)

*Detroit Free Press*: [263](#)

*Deutsche Kriegsnachrichten*: [75](#)

Dewey, Thomas E.: [132](#), [262](#)

Diaghileff Russian Ballet: [73](#), [80](#)

Diderot, Denis: [23](#)

*Dietetic and Hygienic Gazette*: [72](#)

Direct mail: [239–45](#)

Direction, of public relations: [3](#), [82](#)

*Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals*: [162](#)

*Divine Comedy, The*: [18](#)

Dodds, Harold W.: [284](#)

Dodge Brothers Corporation: [85](#)

*Dogs That Climb Trees* (Hoke): [240](#)

Douglas, Paul: 109  
Douglas, Stephen: 49  
*Drunkard's Looking Glass, The*: 40  
Dun and Bradstreet: 118  
Dunne, F. P.: 63

Eastman Kodak Company: 89  
Economic mobilization, importance of public opinion in: 291–300  
*Economist, The*: 304  
Eden, Anthony: 301–302  
Edison, Thomas: 57, 86  
*Editor and Publisher*: 61, 84, 89, 91, 94, 97, 138, 148  
*Editor and Publisher International Year Book*: 162  
Education: 135; of the public, achieving goals through, 181–86; public, public relations for, 269–82; higher, public relations for, 283–90; program for unions, 327–34  
Einstein, Albert: 216  
*Electronics* (magazine): 242  
*Emancipator*: 41  
Emotional appeals: 133, 166  
*Encyclopedia Americana*: 146  
*Encyclopedia Britannica*: 40, 43, 118, 146  
*Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*: 4, 118, 146  
Engels, Friedrich: 25, 76  
England: development of public relations in, 18–19; Anglo-American co-operation, 301–307  
*Era of the Muckrakers, The* (Regier): 64  
Erie Railroad Company: 61  
*ETC; Review of General Semantics*: 144  
Ethnic harmony, public relations as aid to: 308–16  
Events: 179  
Exhibits: 182  
*Experiments on Mass Communication*: 143

Fackenthal, Dr. Frank D.: 285  
*Fact Digest*: 108  
*Factory Management* (magazine): 212, 334  
Fair Deal: 5, 50  
Faxon, F. W., Company: 142  
Federal Security Agency: 273  
Federal Trade Commission: 68  
Fees of public relations counsel: 138  
Fiction, public relations in: 149

Fifth Avenue Association: [80](#)  
50 Club of Los Angeles: [139–40](#)  
Filene, Edward A.: [109](#)  
*Financial Diary*: [110](#)  
Financial Public Relations Association: [139](#)  
Fine, Benjamin: [272](#)  
Fisk, Jim: [53](#)  
Flanders, Ralph: [342](#)  
Fleischman, Doris E.: [78](#)  
Flesch, Rudolph: [243](#)  
Flynn, John T.: [72–73](#), [107](#), [148](#)  
*For Release* (Bercovici): [149](#)  
Ford Foundation: [251](#), [343](#)  
Ford, Henry: [86](#), [113](#)  
Ford Motor Company: [203](#)  
Fordham University: [287](#)  
Fordney tariff: [81](#)  
Forepaugh, Adam: [58](#)  
*Fortune*: [111–12](#), [124–25](#), [149](#), [212](#), [319](#), [320](#), [323](#), [329](#), [331](#), [336](#)  
*Forty Years in Washington* (Barry): [66](#)  
Foster, Emery M.: [273](#)  
Fouché, Joseph: [24](#)  
Foundations: [108](#)  
Four Freedoms: [115](#), [298](#)  
Fourteen Points: [298](#)  
*Fourth Estate, The*: [89](#), [92](#)  
Fox Film Corporation: [150](#)  
France, development of public relations in: [23–24](#)  
Frank, Glenn: [83](#)  
Franken, Richard B.: [141](#)  
Frankenstein, Richard T.: [263](#)  
Franklin, Benjamin: [22](#), [29](#), [32](#)  
Franklin, James: [29](#)  
Free enterprise, selling idea of, to American people: [335–45](#)  
Free puffs: [47](#), [49](#), [58](#), [60](#), [61](#)  
French Revolution: [23](#)  
Freud, Sigmund: [73](#), [250](#)  
Fuggers, the: [21](#)

Gallup, Dr. George: [107](#)  
Gallup polls: [276](#), [277](#)  
Gannon, Father Robert I.: [287](#)  
Garrett, Paul: [105](#), [112](#)

Garrison, William Lloyd: [40–41](#), [58](#)  
*Gazette, The* (Boston newspaper): [30](#), [31–33](#)  
*Gazette, The* (French newspaper): [21](#)  
General Electric Company: [112](#), [113](#)  
General Federation of Women's Clubs: [185](#)  
General Foods Corporation: [112](#), [203](#)  
General Motors Corporation: [105](#), [112](#), [343](#)  
General Services Administration: [153](#)  
*Genius of Temperance, The*: [40](#)  
George, Henry: [55](#)  
*Gilded Age, The* (Twain and Warner): [55](#)  
Goals: public relations, [5](#), [162](#); achieving through the education of the public, [181–86](#)  
Godkin, E. L.: [55](#), [64](#)  
Goldman, Eric: [11](#), [46](#), [53](#), [68](#), [69](#), [70](#), [91](#)  
Good will: [5](#), [82](#), [85](#), [90](#), [124](#)  
Gosner, H. E.: [146](#)  
*Gospel of Wealth, The* (Carnegie): [56](#)  
Gould, Jay: [53](#), [56](#)  
Granger movement: [54](#)  
*Grapes of Wrath, The* (Steinbeck): [100](#)  
Gras, Professor N. S. B.: [11](#), [53](#)  
*Great American Fraud* (Adams): [60](#)  
Great Britain: see England  
Great Debate: [293](#)  
Great Northern Railway Company: [56](#)  
Greenbackers: [54](#), [55](#)  
Greene, Richard L.: [286](#)  
Greenfield Village: [86](#)  
Greeting cards: [243](#)  
Grolier Society: [242](#)  
Group leaders, public relations activities aimed at: [177–78](#)  
Guilds, Medieval: [18](#)

Halifax, Lord: [306](#)  
Hamilton, Andrew: [29–30](#)  
Hamilton College: [285](#)  
Hamilton, Toby: [58](#), [61](#)  
Hansen, Marcus Lee: [28](#)  
Harris, Benjamin: [32](#)  
Harris, William T.: [57](#)  
Harrison, Charles Yale: [149](#)  
Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company: [204](#)

Hartley, Eugene L.: 250  
Harvard University: 69, 78, 289, 313, 332  
Harvard University Press: 123  
Hawaii: 145, 308–16  
*Hawaii Chinese Journal, The*: 309  
Hawaii, University of: 308, 315  
Hawaiian Economic Foundation: 313  
Hawaiian Employers Council: 313  
Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association: 313  
Hawaiian Tourist Bureau: 309  
Hayakawa, S. I.: 337  
Hays Office: 87, 113  
Hays, Will: 87, 138  
Health organizations: 181–86  
Hearst, William Randolph: 64  
Hell-Fire Club: 29, 44  
Hepburn Committee of the New York Legislature: 52  
*Herald Tribune* Institute: 107  
Herring, Pendleton: 146  
Heth, Joice: 38–39  
Hicks, John D.: 146  
Higgenson, Thomas Wentworth: 64  
Hill, James J.: 56  
Hill, John Wiley: 105  
Hinckley, E. B.: 335  
*Hinge of Fate, The* (Churchill): 294  
*History of American Journalism* (Lee): 60  
History, of public relations: 11–125  
Hitler, Adolf: 99  
Hogben, Launcelot: 11  
Hoke, Henry: 240  
Holman, Eugene: 341  
Holmes, Justice Oliver Wendell: 7, 8  
Holtman, Robert B.: 24  
Hoover, Herbert: 77, 86, 99, 106  
Hotchkiss, George Burton: 141  
Hotel Association of New York: 82  
House Magazine Institute: 202  
House organs: 179–80, 202–14  
Hovde, Dr. Bryn J.: 286  
Hovland, Carl I.: 143  
*How We Advertised America* (Creel): 71, 90  
Hudson, Frederic: 47, 48

Hughes, C. F.: [212](#)  
Human relations: [117](#), [317–26](#)  
*Human Relations* (periodical): [144](#)  
Humanists: [19](#)  
*Humanizing of Knowledge, The* (Robinson): [141](#)  
Humphrey, Hubert H.: [340](#)  
Huntington, Collis Potter: [58](#)

Income tax: [100](#)  
*Independent*: [95](#)  
*Independent-Advertiser* (Boston newspaper): [30](#)  
Indonesia: [154](#)  
Industrial College of Armed Forces: [114](#), [292](#), [293](#)  
*Industrial Psychology* (Viteles): [321](#)  
Industrial relations: [116](#), [317–34](#)  
Industrial Revolution: [24](#), [25](#), [35](#)  
*Infantry Journal*: [114](#), [292](#)  
Information: as field of public relations, [2](#), [3](#); a need of a democratic society, [12](#)  
*Information* (periodical): [143](#)  
Institute for Propaganda Analysis: [109](#)  
Institute of Public Affairs: [109](#)  
Institute of Public Relations: [140](#)  
*Institute of Public Relations Journal*: [140](#)  
Institutional advertising: [104](#)  
Integration: [87](#), [111](#); as field of public relations, [2](#), [3](#), era of, [115–25](#)  
Integrity, of public relations men: [126–28](#)  
Interchurch World Movement: [141](#)  
Intercity Radio Corporation: [81](#)  
Interior, Department of (U.S.): [153](#)  
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development: [154](#)  
International Business Machines Corporation: [344](#)  
International Council of Industrial Editors: [204](#), [210](#)  
International Ladies' Garment Workers Union: [150–51](#)  
International Monetary Fund: [154](#)  
International Society for General Semantics: [144](#)  
Interstate Commerce Act: [226](#)  
*Interviewer's Handbook 1949*: [151](#)  
*Introduction to Public Opinion, An* (Childs): [109](#)  
Irving, Washington: [36–37](#)  
*It Can't Happen Here* (Lewis): [149](#)

Jackson, Andrew: [36](#), [41](#), [133](#)  
Jagger, Claude: [313](#)



James, William: [64](#), [65](#)  
Jefferson, Thomas: [28](#), [34](#), [36](#), [133](#), [269](#), [270](#), [307](#), [338](#)  
Jeffries, E. J.: [263](#)  
Jennings Advertising Agency: [60](#)  
Jensen, Friedrich: [250](#)  
John, King: [18](#)  
Johnson, James Weldon: [81](#)  
Jones, John Price: [78](#)  
Jordan, David Starr: [64](#)  
Josephson, Matthew: [53n](#).  
*Journal of Social Issues*: [144](#)  
*Journal of the American Temperance Union*: [39](#)  
*Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872* (Hudson): [47](#)  
*Journalist*, the: [61](#)  
Justice Department, U.S.: [74](#), [153](#)

Kansas City Chamber of Commerce: [79](#)  
Keene, Laura: [58](#)  
Kirk, Jeremy: [149](#)  
Klaw and Erlanger: [59](#), [73](#)  
Knickerbocker, Diedrich: [36–37](#)  
*Knickerbocker's History of New York* (Irving): [36–37](#)  
Knights of Labor: [54](#)  
Knowledge of public relations, importance of: [7–10](#)

Labor-management relations: [317–34](#)  
Labor unions: [150–51](#); education program for, [327–34](#); *see also under names of unions*  
*Language in Action* (Hayakawa): [337](#)  
Larsen, Cedric: [71](#)  
Lasswell, Harold: [4](#), [71](#), [142](#), [146](#)  
*Leader, The* (London weekly): [302](#)  
Leadership: [10](#), [12](#), [102](#), [159](#), [164](#); polls vs., [263–64](#)  
League of New York Theatres, Inc.: [223](#), [225](#), [226](#), [227](#), [234](#), [235–38](#)  
Lease, Mrs. Mary: [54](#)  
Le Bon, Gustave: [65](#), [141](#)  
Lee, Alfred McClung: [28](#), [29](#), [31](#), [33](#), [69](#), [70](#), [145](#)  
Lee and Ross (firm of): [105](#)  
Lee, Ivy, and Associates: [91](#)  
Lee, Ivy, Jr.: [105](#)  
Lee, Ivy Ledbetter: [11](#), [69–70](#), [91](#), [97](#), [108](#), [143](#), [148](#)  
Lee, James Melvin: [60](#)  
*Letters of a Farmer in Pennsylvania, The*: [32](#)

Levy, Harold P.: 143  
Lewis, Sinclair: 149  
Liaison officer: 172–73, 174  
*Liberator, The*: 40, 41, 58  
Liberty Bonds: 45  
Liberty Loan: 78  
Libraries, subscription: 22  
Library of Congress: 91, 141, 142  
*Life Magazine*: 205, 277  
Light's Golden Jubilee: 85–86  
Lincoln, Abraham: 36, 43–44, 46, 48, 58, 183, 269, 270, 338  
Lippman, Walter: 92, 141  
Lipsky, Abram: 93  
*List of References on Publicity with Special References to Press Agents*: 141  
*Literary Digest*: 107  
Literature, public relations: 140–45  
Lithuania: 80  
Lloyd, Henry Demarest: 55  
Lobbying: 54, 57, 64  
*Locomotive* (house organ): 204  
London Press Exchange: 140  
*London Times*: 302  
Long, Huey: 100, 339  
*Looking Backward* (Bellamy): 55  
Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company: 89  
Lowell, A. Lawrence: 141  
Luce, Henry: 138  
Lundy, Benjamin: 40  
Lyman, Levi: 58  
Lynd, Helen: 249  
Lynd, Robert S.: 109, 249  
  
*McCall's Magazine*: 150  
McClelland, Dr. George W.: 286  
McClure, S. S.: 64  
*McClure's* (magazine): 64, 69  
McGraw-Hill Publishing Company: 242  
McManus, J. E.: 61  
Macdonald, J. Carlisle: 105  
MacDougall, Curtis D.: 109  
MacIver, Robert M.: 7, 8, 221  
Magazines: treatment of public relations, 143–44, 148–49; see *a/so* house organs  
Magic: 12

Mail Advertising Service Association of New York: [239](#)  
*Main Currents in American Thought* (Parrington): [31](#), [45](#)  
Majority opinions: [9](#), [10](#)  
*Man in the Street, The* (Bailey): [271](#)  
*Man the Puppet: The Art of Controlling Minds* (Lipsky): [93](#)  
*Management and Morale* (Roethlisberger): [321](#)  
Management, relations with labor: [317–34](#)  
Manley, Marion C.: [142](#)  
*Manual for the Study of Food Habits*: [220](#)  
March of Time: [149](#)  
Market research: [217](#), [248](#)  
Markets, hidden, in the human personality: [215–22](#)  
Martin, Everett Dean: [141](#)  
*Maryland Gazette*: [33](#)  
*Mass Persuasion, the Social Psychology of a War Bond Drive* (Merton): [143](#)  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology: [324](#)  
Matson Navigation Co.: [309](#)  
Mayo, Elton: [116](#)  
*Medical Review of Reviews, The*: [72](#)  
Mencken, H. L.: [83](#), [93](#), [107](#)  
Merton, Robert K.: [143](#)  
Methods, public relations: [83](#), [115](#), [136](#)  
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: [96](#), [209](#), [211](#)  
Metropolitan Musical Bureau: [73](#)  
Michelson, Charles: [107](#)  
*Middletown* (Lynd): [249](#)  
*Middletown in Transition* (Lynd): [249](#)  
*Mightier than the Sword*: [143](#)  
Milk industry: [166](#)  
Miller, Henry: [73](#)  
Millinery industry: [84](#)  
Minority opinion, importance of: [9–10](#)  
Mitchell, John: [57](#), [68](#)  
Mobilization, economic, importance of public opinion in: [291–300](#)  
*Mobilizing Civilian America* (Tobin and Bidwell): [74](#)  
*Moderate, The* (periodical): [21](#)  
*Moniteur*, the: [24](#)  
Monnet, F. S.: [60](#)  
Moody, William Vaughan: [64](#)  
Morgan, Boyce: [241](#)  
Morgan, J. P.: [53](#), [57](#)  
Morgan, J. P., and Company: [105](#)  
Motion picture industry: [87](#)

Motion pictures: treatment of public relations, [149](#); as part of public relations program, [179](#)

Muckrakers: [50](#), [63–64](#), [65](#)

*Munsey's* (magazine): [64](#)

Murphy, Professor Gardner: [221](#), [250](#)

Murray, Philip: [150](#), [332](#)

*Napoleonic Propaganda* (Holtman): [24](#)

Nason, John W.: [286](#)

*Nation, The*: [64](#)

National Academy of Sciences: [220](#)

National American Red Cross: *see* Red Cross

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP): [81](#)

National Association of Accredited Publicity Directors: [139](#)

National Association of Broadcasters: [235](#)

National Association of Insurance Agencies: [89](#)

National Association of Manufacturers: [103](#), [105](#), [112](#), [113](#), [339](#)

National Association of Public Relations Counsel: [139](#)

National Broadcasting Company: [105](#), [150](#)

National Cash Register Company: [203](#)

National Conference of Social Work: Committee on Publicity Methods of the, [140](#); *Proceedings* of the, [141](#)

National Council for Prevention of War: [89](#)

National Council of American Importers and Traders: [81](#)

National Education Association: [185](#), [276](#)

National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs: [66](#)

National Industrial Recovery Act: [99](#), [101](#), [103](#)

National Information Bureau: [185](#)

National Labor Relations Board: [312](#)

National Labor Service: [151](#)

National Labor Union: [54](#)

National Maritime Union: [213](#)

National Opinion Research Center: [276](#), [320](#)

National Publicity Council for Health and Welfare Services: [139](#), [144](#)

National Research Council, Committee of Food Habits of the: [220](#)

National Sales Executives: [215](#)

National School Public Relations Association: [139](#)

National Society for Crippled Children and Adults: [181–86](#)

National Union for Social Justice: [100](#)

National War Aims Committee: [76](#)

National War Fund: [280](#)

*Nation's Business*: [105](#)

Navy, Department of (U.S.): [80](#), [153](#)

Netherlands Public Relations Society: 140  
New Deal: 5, 50, 99, 115, 113, 168, 312  
New England Council: 335  
*New England Courant*: 29  
New Freedom: 5, 50, 64, 65  
*New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Freud): 250  
New Jersey Telephone Company: 85  
*New Leader, The* (magazine): 309  
*New Republic*: 163  
New School for Social Research: 145, 286  
*New York Amulet*: 39  
New York Central System: 51–52  
*New York Daily News*: 262  
New York Emergency Committee for Better Schools: 132  
*New York Evening Post*: 36  
*New York Herald*: 44, 47, 49, 94  
*New York Herald Tribune*: 97  
*New York Post*: 37, 44  
New York Public Library: 141, 224  
New York State College of Forestry: 287  
*New York Sun*: 38  
*New York Times*: 47, 92, 116, 119, 148, 162, 212, 271, 272, 301, 302, 322, 336  
New York University: 84, 119, 144, 246, 285  
*New York Weekly Journal*: 29  
*New York World*: 65, 88, 91  
*New Yorker, The*: 97, 148  
Newcomb, Theodore M.: 250  
*Newspaper Reading Habits of College Students* (Hotchkiss and Franken): 141  
Newspapers: Roman, 16; rise of, 21; first American, 29; U.S., in 1800's, 38  
*Newport Mercury*: 33  
*Newsweek*: 148, 338  
Nixon, H. K.: 246  
*Nobody's Fool* (Harrison): 149  
Nomenclature, public relations: 90–95, 121  
North Thames Gas Board: 140  
*Notes and Clippings* (Lee): 91, 143  
*Noyes' Perfections*: 39  
Nurses and nursing: analysis of survey findings, 187–97; public relations for, 198–201  
  
Objectives, public relations: 42, 161, 162  
O'Connell, Daniel: 41  
Odegard, Peter H.: 146

O'Dwyer, William: [262](#)  
Offenbach, Jacques: [59](#)  
Office of Public Affairs: [153](#)  
Office of Public Information: [153](#)  
Office of War Information: [115](#), [293](#)  
Oil industry: [87–88](#)  
*Opinion and the Crowd* (Tarde): [65](#)  
Opinion Research Corporation: [263](#)  
Opinions: majority, [9](#), [10](#); minority, [9–10](#)  
Organization of public relations: [136](#), [167](#)  
Organizations: public relations, [138–40](#); health, [181–86](#)  
Origins of public relations: [11–16](#)  
Outrigger Club: [315](#)  
Overt act technique: [81](#), [84–85](#), [86](#), [91](#), [167](#)

Pacific Club: [315](#)  
Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company: [203](#)  
Page, Arthur: [105](#)  
*Panay* (destroyer): [266](#)  
Panic of 1873: [54](#)  
*Paradise Lost*: [20](#)  
Paris Exposition: [84](#)  
Park, Robert S.: [95](#)  
Parker and Lee (publicity firm): [69](#)  
Parker, Sir Gilbert: [76](#)  
Parliamentary War Aims Committee: [76](#)  
Parrington, Vernon L.: [31](#), [45](#)  
Parrish, Wayne W.: [107–108](#)  
*Passing of the Frontier, The* (Turner): [275](#)  
Patton, Simon N.: [64](#)  
Pearl Harbor: [99](#), [144](#), [309](#), [312](#)  
Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company: [242](#)  
*Pennsylvania Chronicle*: [32](#)  
*Pennsylvania Gazette*: [33](#)  
*Pennsylvania Magazine*: [32](#)  
Pennsylvania Railroad: [61](#), [70](#), [105](#)  
Pennsylvania State College: [317](#)  
Pennsylvania, University of: [286](#), [324](#)  
Penny Press: [37–38](#), [47](#)  
Periodicals on public relations: [143–44](#), [148–49](#)  
Persia, public relations in: [13](#)  
Personality: evaluation of, [12](#); salesmanship and, [215–22](#)  
Personnel, setup of, to carry out public relations program: [173–74](#)

Persuasion: as field of public relations, [2](#), [3](#); change in methods of, [13](#); right of, [158](#)  
*Persuasion* (periodical): [144](#)  
*Philadelphia Record*: [61](#)  
*Philanthropist*: [41](#)  
Philco Corporation: [108](#)  
Phillips, David Graham: [64](#)  
Pillsbury Mills, Inc.: [203](#)  
*Pilot, The* (house organ): [213](#)  
Planning, public relations: [136](#), [161](#), [165](#), [167](#), [171–72](#), [173](#), [174](#)  
Pollard, James E.: [66](#)  
Policies, public relations: [4](#), [171–72](#)  
Polls: [165](#); preview of American public opinion, [253–59](#); attitude, [260–68](#); Gallup, [276](#), [277](#)  
Poole, DeWitt Clinton: [144](#)  
Populists: [54](#), [55](#)  
Portland Cement Association: [70](#)  
*Post, The* (English newspaper): [24](#)  
Post Office Department (U.S.): [239](#)  
Practices, public relations: [4](#)  
Practitioners, in public relations: [137–38](#)  
Pratt, Frank: [240](#)  
Prejudices: [127](#), [129](#)  
Prentice-Hall, Inc.: [336](#)  
President's Commission on Higher Education: [289–90](#)  
President's Emergency Committee for Employment: [106](#)  
*Presidents and the Press, The* (Pollard): [66](#)  
Press: penny, [37–38](#), [47](#); Lincoln quoted on, [49](#)  
Princeton University: [284](#), [324](#), [332](#)  
Princeton University Press: [109](#)  
Pringle, Henry J.: [70](#), [107](#)  
*Printers' Ink*: [89](#), [90](#), [148](#), [203](#), [246](#)  
*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*: [143](#)  
Procter and Gamble: [84](#), [89](#), [344](#)  
Programs, public relations: [111](#), [114](#), [166](#); setup of personnel, [173–74](#)  
Prohibition: [40](#), [166](#)  
Propaganda: introduction of term, [20](#); political, [48](#); uses, [49](#); war, [72–76](#), [78](#)  
*Propaganda* (Bernays): [95](#), [97](#), [106](#), [291](#)  
*Propaganda Analysis* (publication): [109](#)  
*Propaganda and Promotional Activities* (Lasswell, Casey, Smith): [142](#)  
*Propaganda and the American Revolution* (Davidson): [33](#)  
*Propaganda, Communication, and Public Opinion* (Lasswell, Casey, Smith): [142](#)  
*Propaganda Technique in World War I* (Lasswell): [71](#)  
Psychological research: [248](#)

Psychological warfare: [114](#), [291](#), [293](#), [301](#)  
*Psychology of Advertising in Theory and Practice, The* (Scott): [141](#)  
*Psychology of Peoples, The* (Le Bon): [65](#)  
Public: kinds of, [7](#); classification of, [163–64](#)  
Public Affairs, Office of: [153](#)  
Public Liaison, Division of: [153](#)  
Public opinion: preview of American, [253–59](#); importance of, in economic mobilization, [291–300](#)  
*Public Opinion* (in *Proceedings* of the National Conference of Social Work): [141](#)  
*Public Opinion* (Lippman): [141](#)  
*Public Opinion* (publication): [92](#)  
*Public Opinion and Popular Government* (Lowell): [141](#)  
*Public Opinion and the Steel Strike*: [141](#)  
Public Opinion Foundation: [106](#)  
*Public Opinion Quarterly*: [142](#), [260](#)  
Public relations: difference between publicity and, [5](#); definition, [7](#), [8](#), [109–10](#), [112](#), [120–22](#)  
*Public Relations* (documentary film): [149](#)  
*Public Relations* (periodical): [143](#)  
*Public Relations Directory and Yearbook*: [137](#)  
*Public Relations Journal*: [139](#)  
Public relations man, ideal: [126–36](#)  
*Public Relations News*: [144](#)  
Public Relations Society of America: [138–39](#)  
Public utilities: [87](#)  
Publicity: difference between public relations and, [5](#); development of, [58](#)  
*Publicity* (Wilder and Buell): [93](#), [141](#)  
Publicity Club of New York: [139](#)  
*Publicity Methods for Engineers*: [141](#)  
*Publicity Methods Reading List*: [141](#)  
Puffery: [47](#), [49](#), [58](#), [60](#), [61](#)  
Pulitzer, Joseph: [53](#)  
Pullman Company: [57](#)  
Pure Food and Drug Acts: [226](#)  
Puritan Revolution: [20–21](#), [27](#)

Radio: treatment of public relations, [149](#); as part of public relations program, [179](#)  
*Radio Annual*: [162](#)  
Radio industry: [85](#)  
Railroads: [51–53](#), [56](#), [61](#), [64](#), [69](#), [87](#)  
Raymond, H. T.: [47](#)  
*Raymond of The Times* (Brown): [47](#)  
*Reader's Digest*: [205](#)



*Readings in Social Psychology* (Newcomb and Hartley): 250  
Readings, selected list of, in public relations: 346–60  
Real Estate Securities Exchange: 86  
Receptions: 179  
Red Cross: 71, 154, 162  
Reed College: 145  
*Reference Guide to the Study of Public Opinion, A* (Childs): 109, 141  
Reformation: 17, 19, 20  
Regier, C. C.: 64  
Research: public relations, 10, 151, 164–65, 183–84, 280–81; market, 217, 248; psychological, 248  
*Responsibilities of Business Leadership, The*: 123  
Reuther, Walter: 334, 339–40  
Revolutionary War: 27–34  
Rexall Drug Company: 203  
*Rheinischer Merkur* (newspaper): 24  
Richelieu, Cardinal: 21  
Rienzi, Cola di: 18  
Riley, John W., Jr.: 219  
Rise of public relations, reasons for: 3  
Robber barons: 50–61  
*Robber Barons, The* (Josephson): 53n.  
Robinson, James Harvey: 141  
Rochester, University of: 288  
Rockefeller Center: 105  
Rockefeller, John D.: 58  
*Rocky Mountain News*: 72  
Roethlisberger, F. J.: 321  
Rome, ancient, public relations in: 15–16  
Roosevelt, Franklin Delano: 5, 50, 99, 115, 258, 298  
Roosevelt, Theodore: 50, 57, 64, 65, 66–67, 68, 99  
Roper, Elmo: 124, 151, 277, 319, 329, 332, 344  
Ross, T. J.: 105  
Ross, Vincent C.: 336  
Rotary Club: 163; of Honolulu, 309  
Routzahn, Evart G.: 141  
Routzahn, Mary: 141  
Rudd, Thomas Brown: 285  
Rugged individualism: 53  
*Rum Seller's Mirror, The*: 40  
Russell Sage Foundation: 141

Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith: 20

Salesmanship, public relations approach to: [215–22](#)  
Salons, French: [21](#)  
Samstag, Nicholas: [240](#), [241](#)  
Sarah Lawrence College: [286](#)  
*Saturday Evening Post*: [205](#)  
*Saturday Review of Literature*: [97](#)  
Schools, public, public relations for: [269–82](#)  
*Scientific American*: [92](#)  
Scott, Walter Dill: [141](#)  
Sears, Roebuck, and Company: [344](#)  
Secretary of Public Relations, proposed for U.S. Cabinet: [291–92](#)  
Segmental approach: [43](#)  
Seitz, Don: [88](#)  
Self-education: [135](#)  
Seligmann, Jacques: [85](#)  
Semantics: [43](#), [247](#), [300](#)  
Seward, William Henry: [43](#), [47](#)  
Shakespeare, William: [20](#)  
Share the Wealth campaign: [100](#)  
Shelton Looms: [85](#)  
Shields, Murray: [342](#)  
Shotwell, James T.: [109](#)  
*Silent Speaker, The* (Stout): [149](#)  
Simon and Schuster: [241](#), [242](#)  
Simon, Richard: [241](#)  
Sinclair, Upton: [64](#), [65](#)  
Sklar, Paul: [108](#)  
Sloan, Alfred P.: [112](#)  
Slogans: [33](#), [37](#), [38](#), [51](#), [57](#), [58](#), [65](#), [75](#), [77](#), [82](#), [166](#), [294](#), [339](#)  
Slavery: [36](#), [40–43](#)  
Smaller Business Association of New England: [335–36](#)  
Smith, Bruce Lannes: [142](#)  
Smith, Hugh: [46](#)  
Smith, William J.: [323](#)  
Social Science Association: [61](#)  
Social Science Research Council: [143](#), [146](#)  
Social Security Act: [100](#)  
Socialism: [25](#)  
Socialist party: [54](#)  
Society for Electricity Development: [89](#)  
Society for the Advancement of Management: [324](#), [332](#)  
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues: [252](#), [324](#), [332](#)  
Soekarno, Achmed: [154](#)

Special Libraries Association: 142  
Spencer, Herbert L.: 107, 286  
Spencer, Samuel: 69  
*Spotlight on Labor Unions* (Smith): 323  
*Springfield Republican*: 64  
Square Deal: 50, 65  
Stamp Act Congress: 32  
Stamp Act of 1765: 30, 33  
Standard Oil Company: 54, 55, 60, 65  
Standard Oil Company of Indiana: 87  
Standard Oil Company of New Jersey: 105, 339, 341  
Standards, public relations: 139  
Stanton, Edwin M.: 44  
State, Department of (U.S.): 152  
Steffens, Lincoln: 64, 65  
Stephens, Everett W.: 335, 336  
Stewart, Colonel Robert: 87–88  
Stock market crash: 99  
Stockholders, public relations activities aimed at: 176–77  
Stone, Melville E.: 83  
Strategy, public relations: 10, 42, 136, 165, 167, 171–72, 173, 175, 281, 291  
Strikes: 54, 55, 57, 68, 69, 116, 117, 168, 318  
Subversion: 161  
Sumner, William Graham: 64  
Supreme Court, U.S.: 99  
Surveys: 165, 170–71, 184  
Swarthmore College: 286  
Swope, Herbert Bayard: 91–92  
Symbolism: 13, 15, 23, 166, 243  
Syracuse University: 145, 285

Tactics, public relations: 10, 167, 185, 281, 291  
Taft, William Howard: 67  
Taft-Hartley Act: 151, 211  
*Tampa Tribune*: 95  
Tarbell, Ida: 64, 65  
Tarde, Gabriel: 65  
Tavistock Institute: 144  
Taylor, Dr. Harold: 286  
Teachers College of Connecticut: 287  
Techniques, propaganda: 114  
Techniques, public relations: 42, 55, 58, 72, 83, 89, 102, 115, 157; of Communist party, 25; overt act, 81, 84–85, 86, 90

Technology: [3](#), [26](#), [50](#), [63](#), [159](#), [338](#), [339](#)  
Television as part of public relations program: [179](#)  
Temperance movement: [39–40](#)  
Terminology, for public relations: [90–95](#)  
*Textile News* (house organ): [213](#)  
Textile Workers Union: [151](#)  
*Theatre Arts*: [225](#)  
Theatrical world, public relations in: [223–38](#)  
Themes, public relations: [42](#), [165–66](#), [167](#), [185](#), [281](#), [291](#)  
Thomas, Brother B.: [287](#)  
Thomason, S. E.: [95](#)  
Thompson, J. Walter, Company: [89](#)  
Thorpe, Merle: [105](#)  
*Tide*: [146](#)  
Tilden, Samuel J.: [37](#)  
*Time* Magazine: [148](#), [150](#), [205](#)  
Timing, public relations: [136](#), [171–72](#), [173](#), [175](#)  
Tolley, Chancellor William P.: [285](#)  
Town Hall Meeting of the Air: [149](#)  
Townsend, Dr. Francis E.: [100](#), [339](#)  
Townsend Plan: [100](#)  
Townshend Acts: [32](#)  
Trade associations: [102](#), [103](#), [104](#)  
Trade unions: see labor unions  
Training of public relations men: [135](#)  
Transcontinental and Western Air, Inc.: [203](#)  
Travelers Insurance Company: [204](#)  
*Travelers Protection, The* (house organ): [204](#)  
Treasury Department, U.S.: [45](#)  
*Treasury of Art Masterpieces*: [242](#)  
*Triumphant Democracy* (Carnegie): [56](#)  
Truman, Harry S.: [50](#), [260](#), [309](#)  
Turner, E. J.: [275](#)  
*Two-Way Street* (Goldman): [46](#), [53](#), [68](#), [90](#)

Underwood, F. D.: [69](#)  
Unger, Ralph G.: [287](#)  
Union Pacific Railroad Company: [56](#)  
Unions: see labor unions  
United Automobile Workers of America: [151](#), [339](#)  
United Brewers Foundation: [108](#)  
United Mine Workers of America: [57](#), [151](#)  
United Nations: [154](#), [301](#)

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization: [316](#)  
United Service Organizations: [280](#)  
United States Chamber of Commerce: [105](#)  
United States Commissioner of Education: [275](#)  
United States Committee on Public Information: *see* Committee on Public Information  
*United States Governmental Organization Manual, 1950–51*: [152](#)  
United States Lines: [89](#)  
United States Radium Corporation: [81](#)  
United States Steel Corporation: [104](#), [105](#), [112](#)  
Universal Trade Press: [95](#)  
*Universities—Pathfinders in Public Opinion*: [145](#)  
Universities: public relations for, [283–90](#); *see also* under names of  
University of Chicago Round Table: [149](#)  
*U.S.A., The Permanent Revolution* (Davenport): [123](#)  
*U. S. Steel News*: [105](#)

Vail, Theodore Newton: [70–71](#)  
Valentine, Dr. Alan: [288](#)  
Van Buren, Martin: [37](#), [41](#), [44](#)  
Vanderbilt, Cornelius: [53](#)  
Vanderbilt, William: [51–52](#)  
Veblen, Thorstein: [57](#)  
Visibility, creating: [182–85](#)  
Viteles, Morris: [321](#)  
Voice of America: [91](#), [154](#)  
Volstead Act: [226](#)  
Voorhis, Harold O.: [285](#)

Wagner Act: [257](#)  
Waldo, Rhineland: [84](#)  
Walker, S. H.: [108](#)  
Walker, Stanley: [79](#)  
War Department, U.S.: [79–80](#)  
War propaganda: [72–76](#), [78](#)  
Wasson, R. Gordon: [105](#)  
Watson, William: [39](#)  
*Wealth Against Commonwealth* (Lloyd): [55](#)  
Weed, Thurlow: [47](#)  
Wedding, Nugent: [121](#)  
Welcome Stranger Committee: [82](#)  
Wellington House: [76](#)  
Wells College: [286](#)

Welte, Dr. Herbert D.: [287](#)  
Western Electric Company: [321](#)  
Whitman, Charles S.: [81](#)  
Whitman, Olive: [81](#)  
*Who Knows—and What*: [147](#)  
*Who's Who in America*: [147](#), [228](#), [233](#)  
Wilberforce, William: [41](#)  
Wilcox, David: [69](#)  
Wilder, R. H.: [93](#), [141](#)  
Williams, R. G.: [41](#)  
Wilson, Charles E.: [343](#)  
Wilson, H. W., Company, The: [142](#)  
Wilson, Woodrow: [50](#), [64](#), [65](#), [99](#), [298](#)  
Woods, Colonel Arthur: [106](#)  
*Words That Won The War* (Mock and Larsen): [71](#), [75](#)  
*World Almanac*: [162](#)  
World Court: [100](#)  
World War: I: [72–76](#), [115](#), [116](#)  
World War II: [114](#), [115–16](#)  
Wright, Harry N.: [286](#)

*Yankee City* (Warner): [249](#)  
*Yearbook of Motion Pictures*: [138](#)  
Young, Kimball: [146](#)

Zenger, John Peter: [29–30](#)